Booklist

Leading book discovery

Vol. 119 No. 14
3/15/23

Spotlight on
Picture Books

ALA's 2023
Best Lists

Cover art by Grace Lin, from *Once upon a Book,* by Grace Lin and Kate Messner

ALA American Library Association

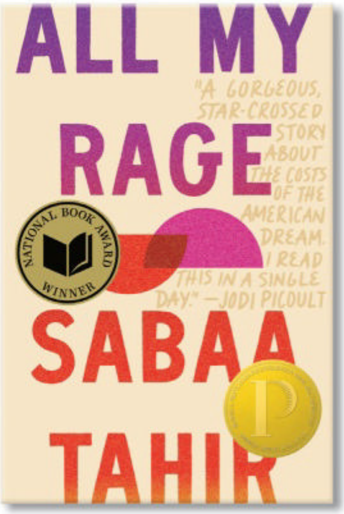
VISIT…

LANZAROTE

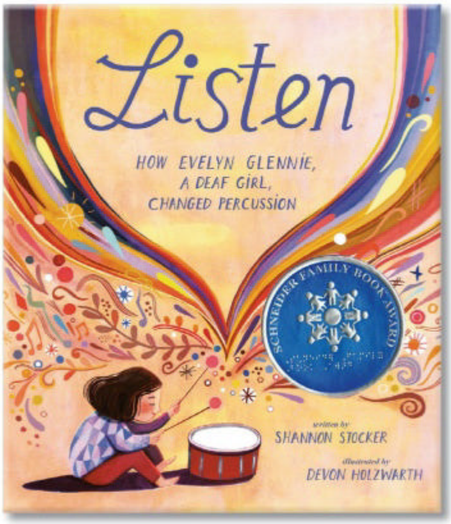
Caliente.com

PENGUIN YOUNG READERS CONGRATULATES OUR

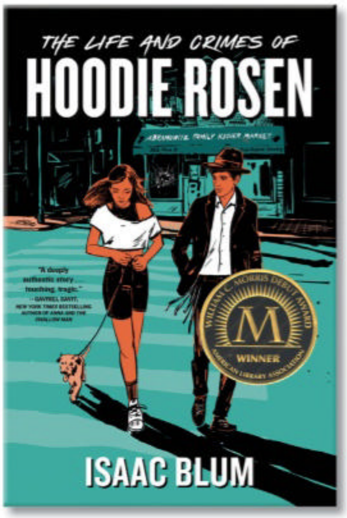
2023 ALA Youth Media Award Winners!


ALL MY RAGE
"A GORGEOUS, STAR-CROSSED STORY ABOUT THE COSTS OF THE AMERICAN DREAM. I READ THIS IN A SINGLE DAY." —JODI PICOULT
NATIONAL BOOK AWARD WINNER
SABAA TAHIR

Michael L. Printz Award Medalist


Listen
HOW EVELYN GLENNIE, A DEAF GIRL, CHANGED PERCUSSION
SCHNEIDER FAMILY BOOK AWARD
written by SHANNON STOCKER
illustrated by DEVON HOLZWARTH

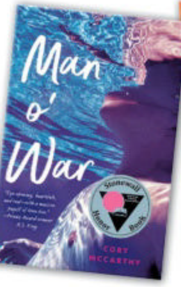
Schneider Family Book Award Winner


THE LIFE AND CRIMES OF
HOODIE ROSEN
WILLIAM C. MORRIS DEBUT AWARD WINNER
ISAAC BLUM

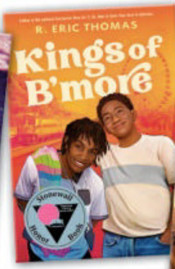
William C. Morris Award Winner

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
IBI ZOBOI
STAR CHILD
A BIOGRAPHICAL CONSTELLATION OF OCTAVIA ESTELLE BUTLER

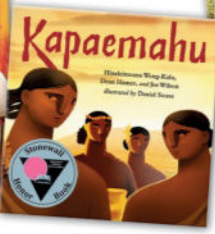
Coretta Scott King Author Honor


Man o' War
Stonewall Honor Book
CORY MCCARTHY

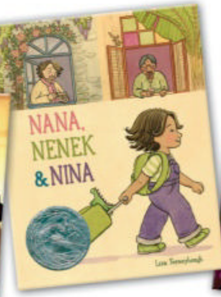
Stonewall Honor


R. ERIC THOMAS
Kings of B'more
Stonewall Honor Book

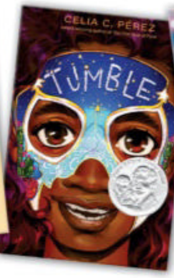
Stonewall Honor


Kapaemahu
Stonewall Honor Book

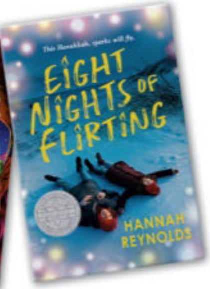
Stonewall Honor


NANA, NENEK & NINA

APALA Honor


CELIA C. PÉREZ
TUMBLE

Pura Belpré Author Honor

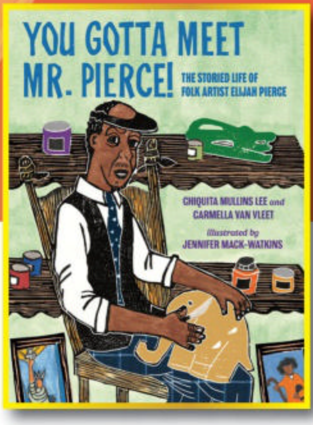

EIGHT NIGHTS OF FLIRTING
HANNAH REYNOLDS

Sydney Taylor Book Award Honor

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE!

Art © 2022 by Devon Holzwarth

THE Stars ARE BEGINNING TO SHINE

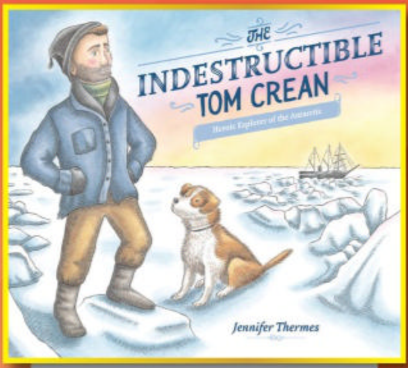

YOU GOTTA MEET MR. PIERCE!
THE STORIED LIFE OF FOLK ARTIST ELIJAH PIERCE
CHIQUITA MULLINS LEE and CARMELLA VAN VLEET
illustrated by JENNIFER MACK-WATKINS

★"Thoughtful and enlightening."

—Booklist

★ Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

★ School Library Connection

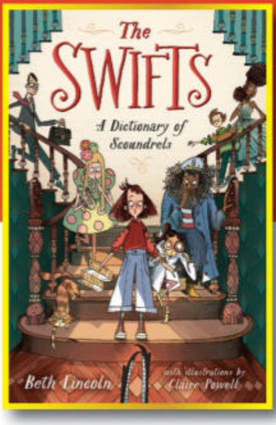

THE INDESTRUCTIBLE TOM CREAN
Heroic Explorer of the Antarctic
Jennifer Thermes

★"Enthralling."

—The Horn Book

★ Kirkus Reviews

★ Booklist


The SWIFTS
A Dictionary of Scoundrels
Beth Lincoln
with illustrations by Claire Powell

★"Absolutely delightful."

—Kirkus Reviews

★ Booklist

★ Publishers Weekly

★ Shelf Awareness

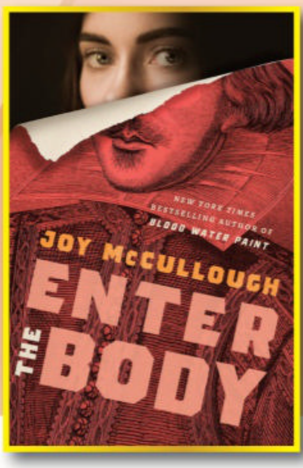
KATE J. ARMSTRONG
In a city full of secrets, their magic is the best-kept one of all.
NIGHTBIRDS

★"A riveting plot."

—Booklist

★ Kirkus Reviews

★ Publishers Weekly


NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF BLOOD WATER PAINT
JOY McCULLOUGH
ENTER THE BODY

★"Truly outstanding."

—Booklist

★ School Library Connection

★ The Horn Book

★ Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

The Girl I Am, Was, and Never Will Be
A Speculative Memoir of Transracial Adoption
Shannon Gibney

★"Lovingly crafted."

—Booklist

★ Kirkus Reviews

★ Publishers Weekly

Booklist

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March 15, 2023
Volume 119, Issue 14

Letter from the Editor / George Kendall

This issue features the *Booklist* Printz Interview with Sabaa Tahir (p.50), author of *All My Rage,* an extraordinary book that won the 2023 Michael L. Printz Award and the 2022 National Book Award for Young People's Literature. It was also *Booklist*'s 2022 Youth Fiction Top of the List Winner (see our December 1 & 15, 2022, issue).

The novel focuses on "estranged friends Salahudin and Noor, who are finding their way back to each other—or not—in the wake of Salahudin's mother's death," writes *Booklist* reviewer Abby Hargreaves, a teen librarian in Washington, DC, in her starred review. "Tahir skillfully and with nuanced handling navigates themes of abuse, found family, guilt, racism and Islamophobia, generational baggage, trauma, and more. A damning story line involving the criminal-justice system makes this novel feel starkly real," continues Hargreaves.

I also highlight *All My Rage* because this issue features ALA's 2023 Best Lists, where, along with other notable books, *All My Rage* makes two appearances, one on the Best Fiction for Young Adults list compiled annually by a committee of the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) (p.6) and the other on YALSA's Top 10 Amazing Audiobooks for Young Adults (p.19). Other exceptional lists include The Reading List: Best Adult Genre Fiction, 2023 (p.5), Notable Children's Books, 2023 (p.10), Top 10 Great Graphic Novels for Teens, 2023 (p.14), The Rainbow List, 2023 (p.15), and many more. Additional 2023 ALA Best Lists are available at booklistonline.com.

After absorbing the bounty of great books reflected in these lists, turn to more in-depth reading with our Spotlight on Picture Books (p.53). In it, Sarah Hunter's "Trend Alert: Picture Books for Older Readers" (p.54) underscores books "that will appeal to those drawn to poetry, the darker side of fairy tales, and thought-provoking explorations of one's place in the world."

Spring arrives at about the same time this issue publishes. This spring, I plan to read outside (maybe some picture books for older readers). I may consider travel (don't miss our Spring Travel Guides section on page 26!) and take walks while listening to audiobooks. There are excellent audio recommendations in Heather Booth's "Listen Up: Atmospheric Accents" (p.69), in which she writes that "listening to an audiobook set in a distant locale can create a sensory backdrop for travel or offer an armchair-travel opportunity." Yes, I look forward to spring adventures, even without leaving home, because so often reading is itself the journey.

Booklist
Spotlight on Picture Books
Best Lists

On the Cover
From *Once upon a Book,* by Grace Lin and Kate Messner, illustrated by Grace Lin, and published by Little, Brown. *Once upon a Book* appears in this issue's Top 10 Picture Books about Journeys. Illustration © 2023 by Grace Lin. Used by permission of the publisher.

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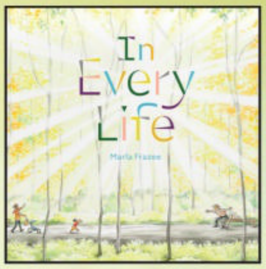
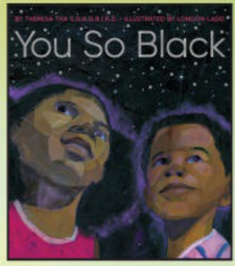
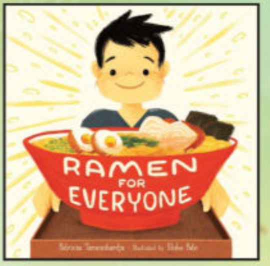
SPRING HAS SPRUNG NEW PICTURE BOOKS FROM SIMON & SCHUSTER!


In Every Life
Marla Frazee

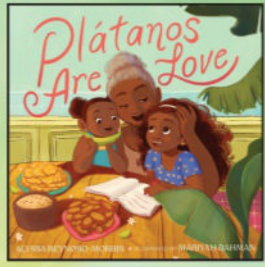
In Every Life
Written and illustrated by
Marla Frazee
HC: 9781665912488
★ 3 starred reviews!


You So Black

You So Black
Written by
Theresa tha S.O.N.G.B.I.R.D.
Illustrated by London Ladd
HC: 9781665900348


RAMEN FOR EVERYONE

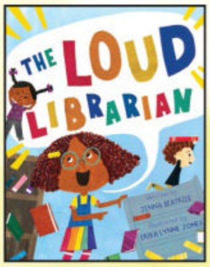
Ramen for Everyone
By Patricia Tanumihardja
Illustrated by Shiho Pate
HC: 9781665904353
A Junior Library Guild Selection


Plátanos Are Love

Plátanos Are Love
By Alyssa Reynoso-Morris
Illustrated by
Mariyah Rahman
HC: 9781665902731

Julia Donaldson & Helen Oxenbury
WELCOME TO THE WORLD

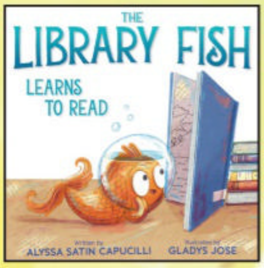
Welcome to the World
By Julia Donaldson
Illustrated by
Helen Oxenbury
HC: 9781665929875
★ *Booklist*, starred review
★ *School Library Journal*, starred review


THE LOUD LIBRARIAN

The Loud Librarian
By Jenna Beatrice
Illustrated by
Erika Lynne Jones
HC: 9781665910545

Daddy Dressed Me

Daddy Dressed Me
By Michael Gardner
and Ava Gardner
Illustrated by
Nadia Fisher
HC: 9781665921954

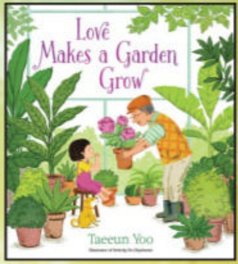

THE LIBRARY FISH LEARNS TO READ
ALYSSA SATIN CAPUCILLI
GLADYS JOSE

The Library Fish Learns to Read
By Alyssa Satin Capucilli
Illustrated by Gladys Jose
HC: 9781534477070

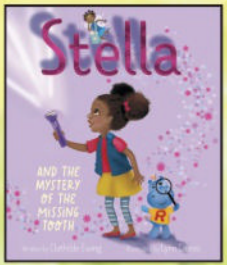
Rain
By Cynthia Rylant
Illustrated by
Lisa Congdon
HC: 9781442465091

LOVE IS LOUD
SANDRA NEIL WALLACE
BRYAN COLLIER

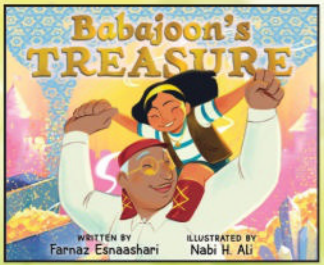
Love Is Loud
How Diane Nash Led the
Civil Rights Movement
By Sandra Neil Wallace
Illustrated by
Bryan Collier
HC: 9781534451032
★ 4 starred reviews!


Love Makes a Garden Grow
Taeeun Yoo

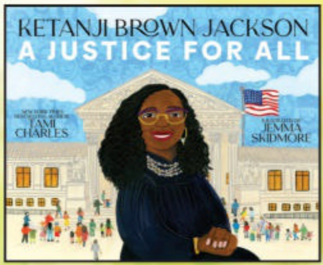
Love Makes a Garden Grow
Written and
illustrated by
Taeeun Yoo
HC: 9781534442863


Stella
AND THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING TOOTH

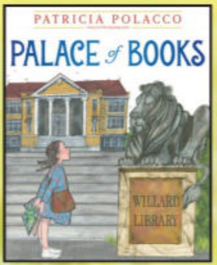
Stella and the Mystery of the Missing Tooth
By Clothilde Ewing
Illustrated by
Lynn Gaines
HC: 9781534487871


Babajoon's TREASURE
WRITTEN BY Farnaz Esnaashari
ILLUSTRATED BY Nabi H. Ali

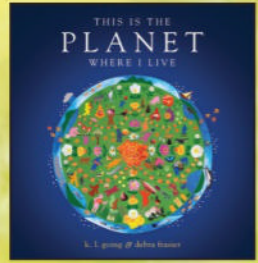
Babajoon's Treasure
By Farnaz Esnaashari
Illustrated by Nabi H. Ali
HC: 9781665901888


KETANJI BROWN JACKSON
A JUSTICE FOR ALL
TAMI CHARLES
JEMMA SKIDMORE

Ketanji Brown Jackson
A Justice for All
By Tami Charles
Illustrated by
Jemma Skidmore
HC: 9781665935265


PATRICIA POLACCO
PALACE of BOOKS
WILLARD LIBRARY

Palace of Books
Written and illustrated
by Patricia Polacco
HC: 9781534451315


THIS IS THE PLANET WHERE I LIVE

This Is the Planet Where I Live
By K.L. Going
Illustrated by
Debra Frasier
HC: 9781481465632

SIMON & SCHUSTER
Children's Publishing

Simon & Schuster
EDUCATION & LIBRARY

Booklist
March 15, 2023
Volume 119, Issue 14

In This Issue

Sections

20 Adult Nonfiction
30 Adult Fiction
42 Graphic Novels
45 Youth Nonfiction
47 Youth Fiction
68 Audio

p. 22, 31, 62

ALA's 2023 Best Lists

5 Notable Books, 2023
5 The Reading List: Best Adult Genre Fiction, 2023
6 Best Fiction for Young Adults, 2023
7 Alex Awards, 2023
10 Notable Children's Books, 2023
14 Top 10 Great Graphic Novels for Teens, 2023
15 Rainbow List, 2023
17 Notable Children's Recordings, 2023
18 The Listen List, 2023
19 Top 10 Amazing Audiobooks for Young Adults, 2023
19 Odyssey Winners and Honor Audiobooks, 2023

Spotlight on Picture Books

53 New Picture Books

54 Trend Alert
Picture Books for Older Readers
by Sarah Hunter

56 Top 10 Picture Books about Journeys

70 New Picture Books on Audio

Features

26 Spring Travel Guides, 2023
by Annie Bostrom

31 High-Demand Read-alikes
Tales of Asylum Seekers, Family, and Love
by Donna Seaman

38 Self-Published Books Showcase
by BlueInk Review

50 The *Booklist* Printz Interview
Sabaa Tahir
by Maggie Reagan

68 Podcast Connection

69 Listen Up
Atmospheric Accents
by Heather Booth

72 *Booklist* Backlist
Fashion in Historical Fiction
by Maribeth Fisher

p. 42, 47, 70

Index to Advertisers

Bloomsbury	64
Capstone	57
Clavis	67
Disney	cover 3
Groundwood	53
Holiday House	13
Lerner	15
Macmillan	60, cover 4
National Geographic	27
Penguin	cover 2
Random House	58, 61, 65
Sequoia	63
Shadow Mountain Publishing	62
Simon & Schuster	3, 59
Yeehoo	66

ALA's 2023 **Best Lists**

Art from *Song of the Cell.*

Notable Books, 2023

The Notable Books Council, ALA Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), presents its annual best-of list of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry titles published in the U.S., books selected for their significant contribution to the expansion of knowledge or for the pleasure they provide. This list has been compiled for use by general readers and for librarians who work with adults. All titles were published in 2022.

Fiction

Elsewhere. By Alexis Schaitkin. Macmillan/Celadon, $26.99 (9781250219633).

A dreamlike allegory about home, identity, and disappearing mothers.

The Haunting of Hajji Hotak and Other Stories. By Jamil Jan Kochai. Viking, $26 (9780593297193).

Life, death, rebirth, and the complex lives of Afghans and Afghan Americans are shared in this surreal collection.

Horse. By Geraldine Brooks. Viking, $28 (9780399562969).

An oil painting and an equine skeleton are clues to uncovering the history of antebellum racetracks and the enslaved trainers who worked there.

Seeking Fortune Elsewhere. By Sindya Bhanoo. Catapult, $26 (9781646220878).

A glimpse into the lives of South Indian families, especially those of the women, at home and abroad.

Stories from the Tenants Downstairs. By Sidik Fofana. Scribner, $26 (9781982145811).

Residents of Harlem on the brink of gentrification offer a snapshot of life within their shared apartment building.

The Furrows. By Namwali Serpell. Hogarth, $27 (9780593448915).

The long tail of grief haunts Cassandra after she and her brother Wayne go swimming and only she returns.

The Rabbit Hutch. By Tess Gunty. Knopf, $28 (9780593534663).

The legacy of a medieval mystic and an unexpected sacrifice spark a young woman's escape from her body and her Midwestern hometown.

The Swimmers. By Julie Otsuka. Knopf, $23 (9780593321331).

An elegant meditation on loss, belonging, and the effects of dementia.

Trust. By Hernan Diaz. Riverhead, $28 (9780593420317).

The truth about an old New York family's fortune is slippery in this experimental novel told in iterative perspectives. Which version is real?

Vagabonds! By Eloghosa Osunde. Riverhead, $28 (9780593330029).

Shimmering characters from the marginalized communities of a Nigerian metropolis are explored through a magical realist lens.

What We Fed to the Manticore. By Talia Lakshmi Kolluri. Tin House, $16.95 (9781953534415).

Nine fables told by animals navigating a fraught world.

Nonfiction

Also a Poet: Frank O'Hara, My Father, and Me. By Ada Calhoun. Grove, $27 (9780802159786).

A bittersweet quest to finish her father's biography of their shared literary hero results in a daughter's deeper understanding of their complicated relationship.

An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms around Us. By Ed Yong. Random, $30 (9780593133231).

This thoroughly researched exploration of nonhuman perception uncovers the joys and challenges of attempting to understand our fellow creatures.

Bitch: On the Female of the Species. By Lucy Cooke. Basic, $30 (9781541674899).

An irreverent and revelatory look at animal behavior that nineteenth-century gentlemen scientists couldn't bring themselves to discuss.

Easy Beauty. By Chloé Cooper Jones. Simon & Schuster/Avid Reader, $28 (9781982151997).

Raw and brutally honest, this multilayered memoir examines life in a disabled body.

The Escape Artist: The Man Who Broke Out of Auschwitz to Warn the World. By Jonathan Freedland. Harper, $28.99 (9780063112339).

Driven by a mission to alert others of the Nazi regime's atrocities, Rudolf Vrba flees an extermination camp and encounters resistance to the truth.

His Name Is George Floyd: One Man's Life and the Struggle for Racial Justice. By Robert Samuels and Toluse Olorunnipa. Viking, $30 (9780593490617).

Original research enriches this comprehensive biography of a big-hearted man, his legacy, and the Black Lives Matter movement catalyzed by his death.

The Song of the Cell: An Exploration of Medicine and the New Human. By Siddhartha Mukherjee. Scribner, $32.50 (9781982117351).

The mysteries of biology and the painstaking efforts of scientists attempting to solve them take center stage in this luminous guide to life's building blocks.

This Body I Wore. By Diana Goetsch. Farrar, $28 (9780374115098).

A candid, poetic account of the winding road to self-discovery and midlife gender transition.

Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation. By Linda Villarosa. Doubleday, $30 (9780385544887).

Numerical data and personal accounts document how medical bias and systemic failures specifically threaten Black people in the United States.

The Vortex: A True Story of History's Deadliest Storm, an Unspeakable War, and Liberation. By Scott Carney and Jason Miklian. Ecco, $29.99 (9780062985415).

Resilience emerges in the wake of a massive cyclone and the political violence it provokes, prompting the birth of the nation of Bangladesh.

We Are the Middle of Forever: Indigenous Voices from Turtle Island on the Changing Earth. By Stan Rushworth and Dahr Jamail. New Press, $28.99 (9781620976692).

Intimate interviews expand the conversation about the global environmental crisis and inspire a hopeful vision of the future.

Poetry

Alive at the End of the World. By Saeed Jones. Coffee House, $16.95 (9781566896511).

A passionate and devastating examination of grieving and surviving the society we've created.

Bless the Daughter Raised by a Voice in Her Head. By Warsan Shire. Random, $17 (9780593134351).

Somali culture and lived experience are detailed in these heartbreaking, eloquent pieces.

The Rupture Tense. By Jenny Xie. Graywolf, $17 (9781644452011).

Lingering reverberations of China's Cultural Revolution and a sense of national disruption, past and present, permeate this collection.

Your Emergency Contact Has Experienced an Emergency. By Chen Chen, BOA, $17 (9781950774692).

Family and queer Asian identity are depicted with vulnerability, humor, and tender playfulness.

The Reading List: Best Adult Genre Fiction, 2023

Established in 2007 by the CODES section of RUSA, the Reading List Council consists of librarians who are experts in readers' advisory and collection development. The Reading List is their annual best-of selection comprised of eight different fiction genres for adult readers, with a shortlist of honor titles in each category. All titles were published in 2022.

Adrenaline

Killers of a Certain Age. By Deanna Raybourn. Berkley, $27 (9780593200681).

Billie, Mary Alice, Helen, and Natalie have spent 40 years as assassins for a clandestine organization. When a fellow assassin targets them during their retirement cruise, they go on a skilled offensive to stop the very organization to which they've given their lives.

- Shortlist: *Cold Fear,* by Brandon Webb and John David Mann (Bantam); *The Lies I Tell*, by Julie Clark (Sourcebooks/Landmark); *Look Closer*, by David Ellis (Putnam); *Wrong Place, Wrong Time*, by Gillian McAllister (Morrow).

Fantasy

Nettle & Bone. By T. Kingfisher. Tor, $25.99 (9781250244048).

A reclusive princess and her unlikely companions, including a loyal bone dog, her fairy godmother, and a demon chicken, embark on an epic quest to save her sister.

- Shortlist: *Babel; or, The Necessity of Violence: An Arcane History of the Oxford Translators' Revolution*, by R. F. Kuang (Harper Voyager); *In the Shadow of Lightning*, by Brian McClellan (Tor); *Legends and Lattes*, by Travis Baldree (Tor); *The Monsters We Defy*, by Leslye Penelope (Redhook).

Historical Fiction

By Her Own Design. By Piper Huguley. Morrow, $16.99 (9780063059740).

Ann Lowe, a highly sought after Black designer from the 1920s to the 1960s, created one of the most famous dresses of the twentieth century—Jackie Kennedy's wedding dress. Lowe's largely untold story traces the highs and lows of her personal and professional life.

- Shortlist: *The Forty Elephants*, by Erin Bledsoe (Blackstone); *The Good Wife of Bath: A (Mostly) True Story*, by Karen Brooks (Morrow); *The Swift and the Harrier*, by Minette Walters (Blackstone); *Two Storm Wood*, by Philip Gray (Norton).

Horror

Leech. By Hiron Ennes. Tor.com, $27.99 (9781250811189).

Over centuries, the Interprovincial Medical Institute has slowly replaced human practitioners of medicine, controlling young minds and shaping them into doctors. When one of the hivemind's many bodies dies mysteriously at an isolated chateau, the replacement investigates and discovers a frightening competitor taking hold in the baron's home.

- Shortlist: *Dead Silence*, by S. A. Barnes (Tor Nightfire); *The Ghost That Ate Us: The Tragic True Story of the Burger City Poltergeist*, by Daniel Kraus (Raw Dog Screaming); *Not Good for Maidens*, by Tori Bovalino (Page Street); *What Moves the Dead*, by T. Kingfisher (Tor Nightfire).

Mystery

The Binding Room. By Nadine Matheson. Hanover Square, $27.99 (9781335426925).

Called to the crime scene of a murdered pastor, DI Henley and her partner discover a torture victim on the brink of death. As the detectives investigate, they realize that the crime is larger than just this case.

- Shortlist: *The Appeal*, by Janice Hallett (Atria); *Down a Dark River*, by Karen Odden (Crooked Lane); *One-Shot Harry*, by Gary Phillips (Soho); *The Verifiers*, by Jane Pek (Vintage).

Relationship Fiction

Mika in Real Life. By Emiko Jean. Morrow, $27.99 (9780063215689).

Former artist Mika Suzuki, age 35, now works a series of dead-end jobs. When the daughter she gave up for adoption 16 years ago reaches out, Mika panics and constructs a fake, aspirational life.

- Shortlist: *Carrie Soto Is Back*, by Taylor Jenkins Reid (Ballantine); *Love & Saffron*, by Kim Fay (Putnam); *Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow*, by Gabrielle Zevin (Borzoi); *The Very Secret Society of Irregular Witches*, by Sangu Mandanna (Berkley).

Romance

The Undertaking of Hart and Mercy. By Megan Bannen. Orbit, $17.99 (9780316394215).

Undertaker Mercy butts heads with marshal Hart when he brings bodies to her family's struggling business. In a low moment, Hart pens a letter addressed to "A Friend" that finds its way anonymously to Mercy. A correspondence is born, with the pair growing closer as the dangers of Tanria escalate.

- Shortlist: *All the Feels*, by Olivia Dade (Avon); *Delilah Green Doesn't Care*, by Ashley Herring Blake (Berkley/Jove); *Honey and Spice*, by Bolu Babalola (Morrow); *The Siren of Sussex*, by Mimi Matthews (Berkley/Jove).

Science Fiction

Drunk on All Your Strange New Words. By Eddie Robson. Tor.com, $26.99 (9781250807342).

Lydia works as a telepathic translator for an alien cultural representative. When he is murdered on a night Lydia barely remembers due to hours of translating, she comes under suspicion. Determined to clear her name, Lydia investigates a lead from an unexpected source.

- Shortlist: *Braking Day*, by Adam Oyebanji (DAW); *Mickey7*, by Edward Ashton (St. Martin's Press); *The Mountain in the Sea*, by Ray Nayler (Farrar/MCD); *Under Fortunate Stars*, by Ren Hutchings (Solaris).

Best Fiction for Young Adults, 2023

The Best Fiction for Young Adults list is compiled annually by a committee of the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and comprises fiction appropriate for ages 12 to 18. All titles were published in 2022 unless otherwise noted. The committee's top 10 choices are identified with an asterisk (*).

African Town. By Irene Latham and Charles Waters. Putnam, $18.99 (9780593322888).

This tells the story of a West African community kidnapped by a rival king, sold to black-market slavers, and brought to Alabama in 1859. After the Civil War, the community worked together to build a town of their own.

The Agathas. By Kathleen Glasgow and Liz Lawson. Delacorte, $18.99 (9780593431115).

Alice and Iris, both with secrets of their own, team up to solve the mystery of a missing fellow high-school student using Agatha Christie's mystery books as a basis for their detective work.

Ain't Burned All the Bright. By Jason Reynolds. Illus. by Jason Griffin. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy, $19.99 (9781534439467).

In this illustrated verse novel, a Black teen tries to find space to breathe during the summer of 2020, with a father in quarantine, a mother glued to the news, and siblings coping in their own ways. A 2023 Caldecott Honor Book and a 2023 Notable Children's Book.

***All My Rage.** By Sabaa Tahir. Razorbill, $19.99 (9780593202340).

Pakistani American teens Salahudin and Noor have been best friends since childhood, but a fight drove them apart just when they needed each other the most. Now, it's a tragedy that brings them back together. The 2023 Michael L. Printz Award winner.

All of Us Villains. By Amanda Foody. Illus. by Christine Lynn Herman. Tor Teen, $18.99 (9781250789259).

Once every generation, the seven great magickal families of Ilvernath send one of their own to compete in a tournament of death to gain control of the rare and powerful high magick supply. This tournament, however, will be unlike any other in its history.

All That's Left in the World. By Erik J. Brown. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray, $17.99 (9780063054974).

After a deadly pathogen kills off much of the population and everyone they care about, Andrew and Jamie find each other when they need it most and band together to undertake a dangerous journey to search for civilization.

Alone out Here. By Riley Redgate. Disney/Hyperion, $18.99 (9781368064729).

When a planet-destroying event occurs ahead of schedule, a group of teens from around the world board and launch a prototype generation ship, *Lazarus*, before realizing that their supplies are severely limited and that there are no adults on board to take charge.

Bitter. By Akwaeke Emezi. Knopf, $17.99 (9780593309032).

Black teen Bitter has found a haven in Eucalyptus, a home for vulnerable teens. When Bitter's talent of bringing her own art to life spirals out of control, she must find a way to stop what she has unleashed or risk destroying her entire town.

Dark Room Etiquette. By Robin Roe. HarperTeen, $18.99 (9780063051737).

Rich and privileged 17-year-old Sayers Wayte is kidnapped by a man who claims to be Sayers' real father. As time passes, Sayers becomes increasingly confused, exhausted, and traumatized as he tries to decide what to believe and how to escape.

***The Door of No Return.** By Kwame Alexander. Little, Brown, $17.99 (9780316441865).

In 1800's Ghana, Kofi's peaceful village life is disrupted when his brother accidentally kills a man in a wrestling match. Disaster follows when, despite the warnings of his elders, Kofi leaves the safety of his village to swim after dark. A 2023 Notable Children's Book.

The Drowned Woods. By Emily Lloyd-Jones. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780759556317).

Mer is a magical water diviner who agrees to assist a former spymaster, along with a few other unique characters, on a dangerous heist that will help her finally escape the clutches of the corrupt prince.

Foul Lady Fortune. By Chloe Gong. Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry, $21.99 (9781665905589).

Set in 1931, in the same world as Gong's These Violent Delights duology, this thrilling series opener pairs supernaturally enhanced assassin Rosalind Lang and Nationalist spy Orion Hong on a mission to stop the grisly murders causing unrest in Shanghai.

Four for the Road. By K. J. Reilly. Atheneum, $19.99 (9781665902281).

It's been over a year since Asher's mother died, and Asher is not okay. He plans a road trip to confront the drunk semi-truck driver who hit his mother, and who better to bring along than his new friends from his bereavement groups?

Gallant. By V. E. Schwab. Greenwillow, $18.99 (9780062835772).

A mysterious letter summons white, British orphan Olivia Prior to Gallant, her estranged family's estate, where she uncovers the dark family legacy from which her late mother tried to protect her.

*__The Getaway.__ By Lamar Giles. Scholastic, $19.99 (9781338752014).

In the near future, Jay works in Karloff Country, "the funnest place around," where the rich and powerful come to escape the crumbling outside world, but when things turn sinister at the resort, he and his friends must fight to survive.

*__Gideon Green in Black and White.__ By Katie Henry. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, $18.99 (9780062955739).

When Gideon Green was younger, he was an obnoxious boy detective. Now retired but still obsessed with film noir, Gideon must again put on his fedora to help his former best friend, Lily.

*__The Girl Who Fell beneath the Sea.__ By Axie Oh. Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250780867).

In this retelling of a classic Korean folktale, 16-year-old Mina sacrifices herself to the Spirit Realm and begins her quest to wake the Sea God and stop the storms that are destroying her homeland.

Hollow Fires. By Samira Ahmed. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316282642). Gr. 9–12.

Indian American Safiya investigates the murder of a local Iraqi refugee, 14-year-old Jawad, who had previously been wrongly arrested and labeled a terrorist. The story is told through the points of view of Safiya, Jawad's ghost, transcripts, news articles, and other media.

Home Field Advantage. By Dahlia Adler. St. Martin's/Wednesday, $18.99 (9781250765840).

Amber, cheerleader and closeted lesbian, tries to hide her feelings for quarterback Jaclyn "Jack" Walsh, but when a plot to undermine all that Jack has worked for is revealed, Amber must decide where her loyalties lie.

The Honeys. By Ryan La Sala. Scholastic/Push, $18.99 (9781338745313).

After their twin sister's violent death, genderfluid teen Mars takes her place at the prestigious Aspen Conservancy Summer Academy to expose the camp's dark secrets, but the truth is scarier and more dangerous than they ever expected. A 2023 Top 10 Rainbow List selection for Teens.

Hopepunk. By Preston Norton. Little, Brown/JIMMY Patterson, $17.99 (9781368057851).

Hope's sister, Faith, ran away to avoid being sent to a facility designed to "cure" homosexuality. Now her friend Danny is getting kicked out of his house for being gay, so she decides to take a stand by moving him into her house and starting a punk band with him.

Hotel Magnifique. By Emily J. Taylor. Razorbill, $18.99 (9780593404515).

Jani barely makes ends meet taking care of her sister, Zosa, in the coastal town of Durc. When a magical traveling hotel appears, they manage to gain employment and think their problems are solved—but they're really just beginning.

How to Survive Your Murder. By Danielle Valentine. Razorbill, $17.99 (9780593352014).

Alice is about to testify at the trial of her sister's killer when she's knocked out in the courthouse bathroom and wakes up a year earlier on the night her sister was murdered, giving her a chance to change the outcome.

How You Grow Wings. By Rimma Onoseta. Workman, $18.99 (9781643751917).

Nigerian sisters Cheta and Zam dream of leaving home and their mother's abuse. Zam's dream

Alex Awards, 2023

The Alex Awards, administered by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and sponsored by the Margaret E. Edwards trust, honor the top 10 adult books published during the previous year with appeal to readers between the ages of 12 and 18. The full, vetted list of the nominations can be found on the YALSA website.

Babel; or, the Necessity of Violence: An Arcane History of the Oxford Translators' Revolution. By R. F. Kuang. Harper Voyager, $27.99 (9780063021426).

In an alternate nineteenth-century London, Chinese-born Robin is admitted to Babel College at Oxford, where he and a diverse cohort will be trained as master linguists who work with silver bars that help power the world and, they soon learn, further England's colonial power by exploiting other cultures and languages.

Chef's Kiss. By Jarrett Melendez. Art by Danica Brine and Hank Jones. Oni, paper, $14.99 (9781620109045).

Recent college graduate Ben's restaurant job seems destined for ruin when he learns his cooking will be judged by a pig. Fortunately, learning to stand up to his parents, flirting with his hot co-worker, and acquiring a new found-family help him uncover a recipe for happiness in this delicious, coming-of-age graphic novel.

Daughter of the Moon Goddess. By Sue Lynn Tan. Harper Voyager, $30 (9780063031302).

In this imaginative retelling of a Chinese legend, young Xingyin disguises herself and leaves the quiet solitude of the Moon. Her voyage takes her across the Celestial Kingdom, where she meets and trains with the young prince and embarks on a desperate quest to save her mother from the Celestial Emperor.

The High Desert: Black. Punk. Nowhere. By James Spooner. Art by the author. Mariner, $26.99 (9780358659112).

In this powerfully charged graphic memoir, Spooner recalls his days as a Black teenager in southern California who found a sense of belonging and identity in the punk movement of the 1980s and '90s.

I'm Glad My Mom Died. By Jennette McCurdy. Simon & Schuster, $27.99 (9781982185824).

Whip-smart, emotionally raw, and filled with humor (even in its darkest corners), child TV star McCurdy's memoir will resonate even with those who never saw her on screen. Examining everything from her early days as an actor to life with an eating disorder, this is an unflinching look at an adolescence lost.

The Kaiju Preservation Society. By John Scalzi. Tor, $27.99 (9780765389121).

Stuck in a dead-end job as a food-delivery person during the COVID-19 pandemic, Jamie Gray eagerly accepts a new job as a laborer for an animal preservation society, only to discover the animals are giant, monsterlike creatures from a parallel universe.

A Lady's Guide to Fortune-Hunting. By Sophie Irwin. Pamela Dorman, $27 (9780593491348).

With both parents dead, younger siblings to provide for, and a mountain of debt, recently jilted Kitty needs to find a husband in a hurry. Fans of *Bridgerton* will adore this entertaining Regency romance helmed by a spirited heroine.

Solito: A Memoir. By Javier Zamora. Hogarth, $28 (9780593498064).

Zamora's intimate memoir tells of the harrowing six-week journey he made as a nine-year-old from his grandparents' town in El Salvador to his parents' home in California. With no contact from family on either side of the border, Zamora had to rely on his grit and the kindness of strangers.

True Biz. By Sara Nović. 2022. Random, $28 (9780593241509).

As a new student at River Valley School for the Deaf, Charlie, who has a cochlear implant, finds learning ASL challenging but rewarding as she finds a new community in Deaf culture. Unfortunately, that community is endangered as the headmistress must fight to keep the school from closing.

Wash Day Diaries. By Jamila Rowser. Art by Robyn Smith. Chronicle, paper, $19.95 (9781797205458).

Four best friends experience the trials and tribulations of modern young womanhood in these interlaced and beautifully illustrated comics. Set in the Bronx, the engaging stories are linked through wash day, a haircare practice that connects women of color in the community.

becomes reality when their rich aunt invites her, but not Cheta, to live with them. While Zam struggles to adapt to a privileged life, Cheta turns to a darker path to engineer her escape.

I Kissed Shara Wheeler. By Casey McQuiston. St. Martin's/Wednesday, $19.99 (9781250244451).

After her moms relocated from California to False Beach, Alabama, Chloe found a new purpose: becoming valedictorian and beating the school's golden girl, Shara Wheeler. What's Chloe to do when Shara disappears before graduation? Find her, of course. A 2023 Stonewall Honor Book.

***I Must Betray You.** By Ruta Sepetys. Philomel, $18.99 (9781984836038). Gr. 8–11.

Seventeen-year-old Cristian is forced to become an informant for the Romanian Securitate in order to help save his ailing grandfather, but under Ceausescu's totalitarian regime, spies are everywhere and no one is safe. A 2023 Notable Children's Book.

I'm the Girl. By Courtney Summers. St. Martin's/Wednesday, $18.99 (9781250808363).

Sixteen-year-old Georgia is thrilled to land her dream job at the exclusive resort Aspera. When she discovers the body of a 13-year-old girl nearby, she agrees to help her sister, Nora investigate Aspera's elite, but she's too dazzled by what she finds to realize the danger.

Icebreaker. By A. L. Graziadei. Holt, $18.99 (9781250777119).

During his freshman year of college, Mickey James III navigates the pressure of becoming the NHL's top draft spot while dealing with mental illness, keeping his grades up, and falling for his rival and teammate, Jaysen. A 2023 Printz Honor Book.

If You Could See the Sun. By Ann Liang. Harlequin/Inkyard, $18.99 (9781335915849).

Shortly after Alice's parents tell her that they can no longer afford her tuition at her elite boarding school in Beijing, she develops an uncontrollable ability to turn invisible and begins spying and divulging the secrets of her classmates for a hefty price.

In the Serpent's Wake. By Rachel Hartman. Random, $18.99 (9781101931325).

In this multifaceted fantasy, a sequel to *Tess of the Road*, Tess sails in search of the last World Serpent to save her dying friend. Their high-seas adventure runs into the volatile political situation in the Archipelagos, where indigenous nations have been subjugated by colonizers.

Into the Sublime. By Kate A. Boorman. Holt, $18.99 (9781250191700).

Four thrill-seeking teenagers explore an unmapped cave system in search of a legendary lake, the Sublime, rumored to have the power to change things for those brave enough to face their fears. When only three return, it's up to Amelie, the group's planner, to tell their tale to the police.

Iron Widow. By Xiran Jay Zhao. Penguin Canada, $17.99 (9780735269934).

In this gripping queer, feminist sf retelling of Chinese history, Zetian becomes a concubine-pilot, the other half of a yin-yang pair able to pilot a giant mecha Chrysalis in an endless war, in order to kill the celebrated male pilot responsible for her sister's death.

Iveliz Explains It All. By Andrea Beatriz Arango. Illus. by Alyssa Bermudez. Random, $16.99 (9780593563977).

After the death of her father, 12-year-old Iveliz is left reeling with no one to turn to as she struggles to manage her mental health. A 2023 Newbery Honor Book and a 2023 Notable Children's Book.

Jumper. By Melanie Crowder. Viking, $17.99 (9780593326961).

Blair is a 19-year-old wildland firefighter who works hard alongside her best friend to prove herself in a male-dominated field for a chance to become a smokejumper, but she is hiding a secret that could change everything. A 2023 Top 10 Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers.

Kiss and Tell. By Adib Khorram. Dial, $18.99 (9780593325261).

As the only out gay member of the Canadian boy band Kiss & Tell, white teen Hunter is used to dealing with scrutiny, but even he is unprepared for the pressure that comes after his ex-boyfriend leaks revealing texts to the press right in the middle of a tour.

Lakelore. By Anna-Marie McLemore. Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250624147).

Two nonbinary teens, Bastian Silvano and Lore Garcia, are pulled into a magical world under a lake, but can they keep their worlds above water intact?

The Last Laugh. By Mindy McGinnis. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, $17.99 (9780062982452).

In this dark sequel to McGinnis' Poe-inspired thriller, *The Initial Insult*, Tress succumbs to guilt over murdering her friend, though she's still committed to finding the truth about her parent's disappearance, while Ribbit Usher plans his own fiery revenge on the bullies who humiliated him.

The Last Mapmaker. By Christina Soontornvat. Candlewick, $17.99 (9781536204957).

Twelve-year-old Sai is assistant to Mangkon's most celebrated mapmaker. When they set out on a journey to chart the seas, she has no idea that the ship may actually be heading to the fabled Sunderlands, a land thought to be guarded by dragons. A 2023 Newbery Honor Book and a 2023 Notable Children's Book.

The Lesbiana's Guide to Catholic School. By Sonora Reyes. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray, $18.99 (9780063060234).

Yamilet is dealing with a lot: fallout from being outed, keeping her brother out of trouble, and navigating a new school. The last thing she needs is a distraction in the form of Bo, a smart, funny, and cute classmate, who also is openly queer. A 2023 Morris Award finalist and a 2023 Pura Belpré Young Adult Author Honor Book.

***The Life and Crimes of Hoodie Rosen.** By Isaac Blum. Philomel, $18.99 (9780593525821).

When 15-year-old Hoodie Rosen and his Orthodox Jewish family move to a new town, Hoodie is shunned for hanging out with a non-Jewish girl while antisemitic hate crimes rise in town. The 2023 William C. Morris Award winner.

Live, Laugh, Kidnap. By Gabby Noon. Razorbill, $17.99 (9780593327296).

Welcome to Violet, Montana, home of a once-thriving but now barely surviving cult as well as a mega-church and a lot of other people just trying to live. Zoe, Genesis, and Holly, three teens caught up in it all, take matters into their own hands. A 2023 Top 10 Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers.

Love Radio. By Ebony LaDelle. Simon & Schuster, $19.99 (9781665908153).

Can Prince, aka DJ LoveJones, convince Danielle, the girl he's been crushing on since middle school, to fall in love with him in three dates? She doubts it but agrees to let him try—especially once she gets to know the guy behind the smooth-talking radio voice. A 2023 Top 10 Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers.

Loveless. By Alice Oseman. Scholastic, $18.99 (9781338751932).

White, 18-year-old Georgia has never been in a relationship or even kissed anyone, so for her first year at university she's determined to find someone—a pursuit that is complicated by Georgia's growing realization that she may not be attracted to anyone. A 2023 Top 10 Rainbow List selection for Teens.

Magic Steeped in Poison. By Judy I. Lin. Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250767080).

Ning's sister is in danger of dying after drinking poisoned tea, the same that killed her mother. Ning enters the competition to find the kingdom's greatest shennong-shi—masters of the ancient and magical art of tea—to win a favor from the princess, her only chance to save her sister.

***Man Made Monsters.** By Andrea L. Rogers. Illus. by Jeff Edwards. Levine Querido, $19.99 (9781646141791).

This collection of horror short stories follows a Cherokee family over generations as they encounter monsters and fantastical creatures ranging from vampires and werewolves to creatures drawn from Cherokee oral tradition.

The Most Dazzling Girl in Berlin. By Kip Wilson. HarperCollins/Versify, $18.99 (9780358448907).

Amid poverty, hunger, and the rise of the Nazi Party, 18-year-old orphan Hilde finds work, acceptance, and love in a queer cabaret in 1932 Berlin.

The Name She Gave Me. By Betty Culley. HarperTeen, $17.99 (9780063157835).

In this novel in verse, Rynn searches for her birth mother but ends up connecting with a younger sister she didn't know existed.

No One Is Alone. By Rachel Vincent. Bloomsbury, $17.99 (9781547609192).

After Michaela's mom dies suddenly, Michaela is forced to move in with her father, who has an entire family in the next town over that she never knew about, including a teenage daughter her own age.

Nothing Burns as Bright as You. By Ashley Woodfolk. HarperCollins/Versify, $18.99 (9780358655350).

Woodfolk captures the intensity of female friendship growing into first love in this fast-paced verse novel. The book takes place over the course of a single day, during which flashbacks intertwine with the present aftermath of a fire set on school grounds that sparks the end of a relationship. A 2023 Top 10 Rainbow List selection for Teens.

Nothing More to Tell. By Karen M. McManus. Delacorte, $19.99 (9780593175903).

Four years ago, three teens found the body of their teacher in the woods behind the school. Now, teen journalist Brynn has moved back to town and is investigating the cold case for her true crime internet show internship. She is not prepared for what she is about to find.

The Ogress and the Orphans. By Kelly Barnhill. Algonquin, $19.95 (9781643750743).

Stone-in-the-Glen used to be a lovely town, but now it's a mean and miserly place. After the mayor stokes suspicion concerning the ogress living near town, the orphans take it upon themselves to unmask the true villain. A 2023 Notable Children's Book.

One for All. By Lillie Lainoff. Farrar, $18.99 (9780374314613).

When her ex-Musketeer father is murdered, Tania, who has a chronic illness, is sent to a boarding school that secretly teaches a select group of girls to wield swords and spy on treacherous nobles in order to protect France as a new, clandestine branch of the Musketeers.

One True Loves. By Elise Bryant. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray, $17.99 (9780062982865).

Lenore is having trouble committing to a path after high school, despite her parents' pressure. She's also not a hopeless romantic like her best friend, Tessa, and she's too pragmatic for grand swooping love—until she embarks on a European cruise and meets insufferable Alex Lee.

Our Crooked Hearts. By Melissa Albert. Flatiron, $18.99 (9781250826367).

A series of increasingly unsettling incidents leads white teen Ivy to suspect that her mother may be harboring dangerous and magical secrets from her past.

Queen of the Tiles. By Hanna Alka. Simon & Schuster/Salaam Reads, $18.99 (9781534494558).

Najwa Bakri is ready to return to competitive Scrabble after she watched her best friend, Trina Low, suddenly die at a tournament. Najwa has spent the past year dealing with her grief, which she thinks is under control until someone starts posting from Trina's Instagram.

The Red Palace. By June Hur. Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250800558).

1758, Joseon, Korea: 18-year-old palace nurse Hyeon becomes embroiled in the investigation of the deaths of four women when her beloved mentor is arrested for the crime despite the mysterious posters around town accusing the crown prince of the murders.

Rust in the Root. By Justina Ireland. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray, $18.99 (9780063038226).

In an alternate 1937 suffering from environmental disaster, Black mage Laura joins the Bureau of the Arcane's Conservation Corps to combat the Blight, hoping to get her own mage's license. On her first mission, she discovers strange new powers—and that the Blight isn't what it seems.

A Scatter of Light. By Malinda Lo. Dutton, $18.99 (9780525555285). Gr. 9–12.

After compromising pictures of her are shared, Aria Tang is sent to California to spend the summer with her grandmother. Aria befriends Steph, her grandmother's gardener, and is welcomed into the working-class queer community that she is part of.

Scout's Honor. By Lily Anderson. Holt, $18.99 (9781250246738).

Prudence Perry was a Lady Bird Scout, sworn to protect an unsuspecting populace from interdimensional monsters, but she's been retired for three years. It is with reluctance that she agrees to train a new trio of Scouts to face the horrors that caused her to leave the Lady Birds. A 2023 Printz Honor Book.

***The Summer of Bitter and Sweet.** By Jen Ferguson. HarperCollins/Heartdrum, $17.99 (9780063086166).

Métis teen Lou finds her final summer before college upended by the return of a former best friend and the unexpected release from prison of her rapist biological father. A 2023 Morris Award finalist, a 2023 Stonewall Honor Book, and a 2023 Top 10 Rainbow List selection for Teens.

***The Sunbearer Trials.** By Aiden Thomas. Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250822130).

Teo, 17-year-old trans son of Quetzal, goddess of birds, is one of the 10 semidioses chosen to compete in the Sunbearer Trials, an event held to determine who will be sacrificed to light the temples of Reino del Sol. A 2023 Top 10 Rainbow List selection for Teens.

Sunny G's Series of Rash Decisions. By Navdeep Singh Dhillon. Dial, $17.99 (9780593109977).

Sunny decides to spend prom night making only rash decisions, in honor of his recently deceased brother. He shaves off his beard, stops wearing his turban, and befriends rash-behavior expert Mindii. What follows is a wild night of fun, drama, romance, grief, and possibility.

Thirst. By Varsha Bajaj. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, $17.99 (9780593354391).

Twelve-year-old Minni lives in the poorest part of Mumbai with limited access to water. Minni dreams of finishing school and getting a good job, but after witnessing thieves stealing water, she has some hard choices to make.

This Vicious Grace. By Emily Thiede. St. Martin's/Wednesday, $18.99 (9781250794055).

Alessa is the Finestra, gifted divine power to protect her island from demons, paired with another chosen capable of withstanding her deadly touch. After she is almost assassinated, Alessa hires street fighter Dante to be her bodyguard until she can find her fated partner and save the world.

A Thousand Steps into Night. By Traci Chee. Clarion, $18.99 (9780358469988).

After a mysterious incident with a demon causes Miuko to start becoming a demon herself, she is forced to flee her home and seek out a way to reverse the curse. It's not long, however, before she starts to wonder if she really wants her old life back.

Undercover Latina. By Aya de León. Candlewick, $18.99 (9781536223743).

Fourteen-year-old Latina Andréa spies for The Factory, an international organization protecting people of color. On her first solo mission, she joins a new school as white Andrea Burke in order to befriend Kyle, the estranged son of a white supremacist suspected of plotting a deadly attack.

Valiant Ladies. By Melissa Grey. Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250622204).

Proper ladies by day and sword-wielding vigilantes by night, best friends Kiki and Ana face their biggest challenge when Kiki's brother is murdered on the same night that Kiki's engagement is announced to high society of seventeenth-century Potosi.

Very Bad People. By Kit Frick. Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry, $19.99 (9781534449732).

Ever since Calliope and her sisters survived a car crash and their mother didn't, questions have swirled. Now Calliope will attend the boarding school her mother went to, leaving her family and idyllic town behind. Will she gain answers, or will secrets surface that should stay buried?

Vinyl Moon. By Mahogany L. Browne. Crown, $18.99 (9780593176436).

Forced to move from California to Brooklyn, Angel can't shake the feeling that everything that led her here is her fault. With the help of her new classmates and a connection with literature and music, Angel rebuilds her confidence, sense of identity, and relationship with her family. A 2023 Rise: A Feminist Book Project Top 10.

We Weren't Looking to Be Found. By Stephanie Kuehn. Disney/Hyperion, $17.99 (9781368064101).

Two girls from different backgrounds staying at a mental health treatment center overcome their assumptions to forge a supportive friendship, all while struggling to break out of self-destructive cycles of depression, anxiety, and addiction.

The Weight of Blood. By Tiffany D. Jackson. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, $18.99 (9780063029149).

In a town with segregated proms, racial tensions are simmering right below the surface. When Maddy, a bullied girl pretending to be white, goes to the first integrated prom with the star quarterback, all the town's racial tensions come to an explosive confrontation.

What We Harvest. By Ann Fraistat. Delacorte, $18.99 (9780593382165).

After a blight spreads through the farms in Wren's rural town, ruining their famously magical crops and turning people into monsters, Wren and her ex-boyfriend must uncover the secret of the town's magic to stop the blight from taking everyone.

When You Get the Chance. By Emma Lord. St. Martin's/Wednesday, $18.99 (9781250783349).

Millie Price is dead set on becoming a Broadway star, but her introverted dad doesn't want her to leave home. When Millie finds her dad's LiveJournal from 2003, she decides to finally find out who her birth mother is.

ONLINE ALERT! For more 2023 ALA Best lists, visit booklistonline.com.

The Year I Stopped Trying. By Katie Heaney. Knopf, $18.99 (9780593118283).

After accidentally missing an assignment, Mary, a straight-A student, finds herself in an existential crisis and makes a conscious decision to see what happens when she stops trying altogether.

You'd Be Home Now. By Kathleen Glasgow. Delacorte, $18.99 (9780525708049).

Emory's brother, Joey, is an addict, but no one finds out until the night of a fatal car accident. Now that Joey is home from rehab, Emory finds herself struggling to help her brother maintain sobriety while also navigating her own issues.

Notable Children's Books, 2023

This list was compiled by the Notable Children's Books Committee of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC). The committee, comprising librarians from throughout the U.S., selected the titles from the several thousand children's books published during 2022. Included are books of fiction, information, poetry, and pictures—all of special interest and value to children through age 14. The winners of the 2023 ALSC Newbery, Caldecott, Sibert, Batchelder, children's Belpré, and Geisel Awards and the Honor Books for those awards are automatically included on the list. Notable Children's Books that were given 2023 Coretta Scott King Awards, Printz Awards, Sydney Taylor Awards, Stonewall Book Awards, Asian/Pacific American Awards, Best Fiction for Young Adults, Top 10 Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers, and Rise: A Feminist Book Project Top 10 designations are noted below as well.

Younger Readers

Also. By E. B. Goodale. Illus. by the author. Clarion, $17.99 (9780358153948).

Soft, beautiful paintings in blueberry ink illuminate the way in which the past and present remain close through the memories of three generations.

Bathe the Cat. By Alice B. McGinty. Illus. by David Roberts. Chronicle, $17.99 (9781452142708).

Dad gives everyone in his diverse family chores to prepare for Grandma's visit, including bathing the cat. However, the mischievous cat has other plans. A 2023 Top 10 Rainbow List selection for Younger Readers.

Berry Song. By Michaela Goade. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316494175).

Featuring informative back matter, this picture book follows a Tlingit grandmother and granddaughter as they gather berries like their ancestors before them. A 2023 Caldecott Honor Book.

The Coquíes Still Sing: A Story of Home, Hope, and Rebuilding. By Karina Nicole González. Illus. by Krystal Quiles. Roaring Brook, $18.99 (9781250787187).

The power of community, hope, and resilience is captured in this story of a family preparing for Hurricane María in Puerto Rico and their subsequent role in rebuilding their home. A 2023 Pura Belpré Children's Author Honor Book and a 2023 Pura Belpré Illustrator Honor Book.

Endlessly Ever After: Pick Your Path to Countless Fairy Tale Endings. By Laurel Snyder. Illus. by Dan Santat. Chronicle, $18.99 (9781452144825).

Fun, detailed illustrations will enchant young readers as they decide how a variety of fractured fairy tales will play out.

Every Dog in the Neighborhood. By Philip C. Stead. Illus. by Matthew Cordell. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823444274).

Following his grandmother's example of community activism, Louis carries out a census to count every dog in his neighborhood. Along the way, he makes new friends, including furry ones.

Everything in Its Place: A Story of Books and Belonging. By Pauline David-Sax. Illus. by Charnelle Pinkney Barlow. Doubleday, $17.99 (9780593378823).

Dynamic, mixed-media illustrations feature bookworm Nicky, who is inspired to overcome her shyness after meeting a diverse group of motorcycle-riding women at her mom's café.

Farmhouse. By Sophie Blackall. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316528948).

Using detailed multimedia art—including materials from salvaged artifacts—and one long, rhythmic sentence, Blackall describes the daily lives of the large family that once lived in her old farmhouse.

Finding Fire. By Logan S. Kline. Illus. by the author. Candlewick, $18.99 (9781536213027).

This wordless picture book uses a bright palette to tell the story of a young member of a prehistoric community who volunteers to find fire when their source is doused by rain.

Fire Chief Fran. By Linda Ashman. Illus. by Nancy Carpenter. Astra/Astra Young Readers, $17.99 (9781635924268).

Rhyming sentences showcase the daily activities of Fran's fire crew, from their varied emergency runs to how they spend their time at the firehouse in between.

Fish and Wave. By Sergio Ruzzier. Art by the author. HarperAlley, $16.99 (9780063076679).

This gentle, action-packed comics reader presents a distinctive anthropomorphic pair navigating the early waters of friendship. Flexibility is key as this duo transitions from "me" and "you" to a playful "we." A 2023 Geisel Honor Book.

The Flamingo. By Guojing. Art by the author. Random House Studio, $18.99 (9780593127315)

In an exquisitely illustrated, nearly wordless graphic novel, a young girl's lao lao (grandmother) shares the tale of a flamingo raised from an egg, inspiring the girl to continue the story back home.

Gigi and Ojiji. By Melissa Iwai. Illus. by the author. Harper, $16.99 (9780063208063).

Gigi's excitement about meeting Ojiji, her Japanese grandfather, gives way to uncertainty when he arrives. After her mother reassures her, Gigi and Ojiji begin to settle into a new, warm relationship. A 2023 Geisel Honor Book.

H Is for Harlem. By Dinah Johnson. Illus. by April Harrison. Little, Brown/Christy Ottaviano, $18.99 (9780316322379).

Accompanied by gorgeously detailed illustrations, this alphabetical ode to Harlem's Black history and culture celebrates historical figures, buildings, institutions, works of art, and more.

Hello, Puddle! By Anita Sanchez. Illus. by Luisa Uribe. Clarion, $17.99 (9780358381440).

This nonfiction picture book introduces young readers to a puddle and the many animals that use it for shelter and sustenance throughout the seasons.

A History of Me. By Adrea Theodore. Illus. by Erin K. Robinson. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823442577).

Powerful illustrations illuminate this tale of a Black girl's journey to finding self-acceptance and pride in her heritage despite the racism she faces as the only Black person in her class.

Honeybee Rescue: A Backyard Drama. By Loree Griffin Burns. Illus. by Ellen Harasimowicz. Charlesbridge, $16.99 (9781623542399).

When part of Mr. Connery's bee colony moves to his shed, Mr. Nelson uses his expertise and homemade bee vacuum to rehome the bees without causing harm. Engaging photographs capture the process clearly.

Hot Dog. By Doug Salati. Illus. by the author. Knopf, $18.99. (9780593308431).

City sounds and heat, brought to life with searing oranges, give way to cool, tranquil greens and blues, as a dog and its human sojourn to the beach for fun and relaxation. The 2023 Caldecott Medal winner.

How to Say Hello to a Worm: A First Guide to the Outside. By Kari Percival. Illus. by the author. Penguin Workshop/RISE, $17.99 (9780593226797)

Conversational questions and answers help a group of little ones learn about the process of planting a garden and the wonders of the outdoors.

I Did It! By Michael Emberley. Illus. by the author. Holiday, $14.99 (9780823446513).

With determination and some help from friends, a little creature learns to ride a bike. The 2023 Theodor Seuss Geisel Award winner.

João by a Thread. By Roger Mello. Illus. by the author. Tr. By Daniel Hahn. Elsewhere Editions, $18.95 (9781953861344).

João dreams of floating through watery landscapes covered by elaborate embroideries until a hole swallows them. Startled awake, he weaves words together into a comforting lullaby. A 2023 Batchelder Honor Book.

John's Turn. By Mac Barnett. Illus. by Kate Berube. Candlewick, $17.99 (9781536203950).

Every Friday during assembly, one student performs a talent. When it's John's turn, everyone can tell he's nervous, but his ability to dance ballet surprises and delights his classmates.

Kitty. By Rebecca Jordan-Glum. Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook, $18.99 (9781250768049).

Granny thinks cat-sitting will be easy until, without her knowledge, a raccoon switches places with the cat and proceeds to cause chaos.

Knight Owl. By Christopher Denise. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown/Christy Ottaviano, $17.99 (9780316310628).

A young owl achieves his dream of becoming a knight, but his bravery and cleverness are quickly put to the test in this charming and humorous picture book. A 2023 Caldecott Honor Book.

A Land of Books: Dreams of Young Mexihcah Word Painters. By Duncan Tonatiuh. Illus. by the author. Abrams, $19.99 (9781419749421).

A Mexihcah girl describes the beauty and importance of language, culture, and tradition to her younger brother in this tale about Mesoamerican storytelling and bookmaking. A 2023 Pura Belpré Illustrator Honor Book.

Listen: How Evelyn Glennie, a Deaf Girl, Changed Percussion. By Shannon Stocker. Illus. by Devon Holzwarth. Dial, $17.99 (9780593109694).

This picture book biography tells the true story of Evelyn Glennie, a deaf girl, who creates incredible music and becomes the world's first full-time solo percussionist. The 2023 Schneider Family Book Award Young Children winner.

Lizzy and the Cloud. By Terry Fan and Eric Fan. Illus. by the authors. Simon & Schuster, $18.99 (9781534483170).

Lifelike illustrations capture this whimsical account of Lizzy as she cares for her growing pet cloud and learns tough lessons about knowing when to set something she loves free.

Luli and the Language of Tea. By Andrea Wang. Illus. by Hyewon Yum. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823446148).

In her class of English language learners, Luli creates community and breaks the ice by sharing a pot of tea, a ritual common across many cultures.

Magic: Once Upon a Faraway Land. By Mirelle Ortega. Illus. by the author. Cameron Kids, $18.99 (9781951836573).

From her family's pineapple farm in Mexico, a young girl relates a story of the beauty and magic of transformation: words to stories, rain and dirt to fruit, and threads to blankets. A 2023 Pura Belpré Illustrator Honor Book.

Me and the Boss: A Story about Mending and Love. By Michelle Edwards. Illus. by April Harrison. Random/Anne Schwartz, $18.99 (9780593310670).

A little boy and his older sister learn to embroider at a library program. Although he struggles at first, he persists in finishing his project and surprises his sister by mending her teddy bear. A 2023 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Book.

The Notebook Keeper: A Story of Kindness from the Border. By Stephen Briseño. Illus. by Magdalena Mora. Random House Studio, $17.99 (9780593307052).

In a heartening story of compassion and generosity, Noemi and her mother, who are denied entry into the U.S. from Mexico, add their names to the notebook, an unofficial list of those waiting to cross the border. A 2023 Pura Belpré Children's Author Honor Book.

Out of a Jar. By Deborah Marcero. Illus. by the author. Putnam, $17.99 (9780593326374).

A bunny bottles up his overwhelming emotions and hides them away. When storage becomes a problem, he learns to embrace difficult feelings in order to let them go.

Owl and Penguin. By Vikram Madan. Illus. by the author. Holiday, $14.99 (9780823451500).

In three short chapters, Owl and Penguin support each other and find humor in sharing ice cream, attempting to fly, and enjoying a rainy day. A 2023 Geisel Honor Book.

Powwow Day. By Traci Sorell. Illus. by Madelyn Goodnight. Charlesbridge, $17.99 (9781580899482)

Unable to dance at her local powwow due to a recent illness, a young girl finds hope for next year while watching her community dance for her healing. Back matter provides additional information about powwows.

A Seed Grows. By Antoinette Portis. Illus. by the author. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823448920).

The life cycle of a sunflower from seed to flower and back to seed is presented in minimalistic, lyrical text accompanied by richly textured images of the plant at each stage of development. A 2023 Sibert Honor Book and a 2023 Geisel Honor Book.

Still Dreaming / Seguimos soñando. By Claudia Guadalupe Martínez. Illus. by Magdalena Mora. Tr. by Luis Humberto Crosthwaite. Lee & Low/Children's Book, $20.95 (9780892394340).

Fearing separation, a family makes the difficult decision to leave their home in this poignant story, told through the eyes of a child, that recounts the Mexican Repatriation in the U.S. during the 1930s. A 2023 Pura Belpré Illustrator Honor Book.

Sweet Justice: Georgia Gilmore and the Montgomery Bus Boycott. By Mara Rockliff. Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. Random House Studio, $18.99 (9781524720643).

Exceptional writing and rich illustrations shed light on everyday civil rights hero Georgia Gilmore in this thoroughly researched picture book biography. A 2023 Sibert Honor Book.

The Talk. By Alicia D. Williams. Illus. by Briana Mukodiri Uchendu. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy, $18.99 (9781534495296).

This picture book highlights the sensitive conversation many Black and brown families must have with their children about safety because of their skin color. A 2023 Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff. By Mac Barnett. Illus. by Jon Klassen. Scholastic/Orchard, $18.99 (9781338673845).

Infused with clever language and humor, the classic tale of the "Three Billy Goats Gruff" is retold with delightfully surprising illustrations.

Too Early. By Nora Ericson. Illus. by Elly MacKay. Abrams, $18.99 (9781419742071).

A father and child wake in time to watch the sunrise in this relatable early morning story illustrated with deep blues and beckoning yellow sunlight.

The Tower of Life: How Yaffa Eliach Rebuilt Her Town in Stories and Photographs. By Chana Stiefel. Illus. by Susan Gal. Scholastic, $18.99 (9781338225891).

Years after the Holocaust, Yaffa Eliach traveled the world to collect photographs from former members of her destroyed shtetl, which were used to create the Tower of Life memorial exhibit at the U.S. Holocaust Museum. A 2023 Sydney Taylor Gold Medalist and a 2023 Sibert Honor Book.

A Walk through the Rain Forest. By Martin Jenkins. Illus. by Vicky White. Candlewick, $18.99 (9781536211207).

Realistically detailed, grayscale illustrations featuring splashes of color adorn this sophisticated seek-and-find book, which conversationally describes the plants and animals one may see on a walk through a Malaysian rain forest.

Where Wonder Grows. By Xelena González. Illus. by Adriana M. Garcia. 2021. Cinco Puntos, $17.95 (9781947627468).

A grandmother helps her granddaughters discover and appreciate the natural elements of Mother Earth and the healing and strength found in intergenerational communities and families. The 2023 Pura Belpré Illustrator Award winner.

The World Belonged to Us. By Jacqueline Woodson. Illus. by Leo Espinosa. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, $18.99 (9780399545498).

A flashback to a childhood "not so long ago" shows a time when a diverse group of kids were free to explore and play on their Brooklyn block during the summer.

Yellow Dog Blues. By Alice Faye Duncan. Illus. by Chris Raschka. Eerdmans, $18.99 (9780802855534).

Embroidered illustrations and lyrical language tell the story of a little boy's journey along the Mississippi Blues Trail as he chases his runaway dog, who just wants to sing the blues.

Yes We Will: Asian Americans Who Shaped This Country. By Kelly Yang. Dial, $18.99 (9780593463055).

Yang partners with various Asian American and Asian artists to create an ode to Asian American changemakers. Biographical back matter complements the sparse text.

Yoshi and the Ocean: A Sea Turtle's Incredible Journey Home. By Lindsay Moore. Illus. by the author. Greenwillow, $18.99 (9780063060982).

Following loggerhead sea turtle Yoshi's 25,000-mile journey home after 20 years of captive rehabilitation, this informational picture book utilizes lyrical text, maps, and infographics.

Middle Readers

Aviva vs. the Dybbuk. By Mari Lowe. Levine Querido, $17.99 (9781646141258).

Haunted by a mischievous dybbuk, Aviva rekindles an old friendship, finds support in her Orthodox Jewish community, and begins to come to terms with a repressed traumatic memory. A 2023 Sydney Taylor Book Award Gold Medalist.

Black Bird, Blue Road. By Sofiya Pasternack. HarperCollins/Versify, $16.99 (9780358572039).

Ziva will do anything, even bargain with the Angel of Death, to cure her twin brother's leprosy in this spiritual adventure set in the Khazarian Jewish Empire. A 2023 Sydney Taylor Silver Medalist.

Choosing Brave: How Mamie Till-Mobley and Emmett Till Sparked the Civil Rights Movement. By Angela Joy. Illus. by Janelle Washington. Roaring Brook, $19.99 (9781250220950).

Accompanied by striking cut-paper illustrations, this moving picture book biography illuminates Mamie Till-Mobley's life and the ways in which the murder of her son affected her activism during the civil rights era. The 2023 Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent Illustrator Award winner, a 2023 Caldecott Honor Book, and a 2023 Sibert Honor Book.

Concrete: From the Ground Up. By Larissa Theule. Illus. by Steve Light. Candlewick, $18.99 (9781536212501).

Informative and humorous, this picture book offers a fascinating introduction to the history, characteristics, and uses of a ubiquitous building material: concrete.

Different: A Story of the Spanish Civil War. By Mónica Montañés. Illus. by Eva Sánchez Gómez. Tr. by Lawrence Schimel. Eerdmans, $17.99 (9780802855985).

Told in the alternating voices of two brothers, this picture book reveals the everyday life and deprivation faced by the siblings during the Spanish Civil War. A 2023 Batchelder Honor Book.

Dragonfly Eyes. By Cao Wenxuan. Tr. by Helen Wang. Candlewick, $19.99 (9781536200188).

In a story spanning three generations, a family, whose wealth brings them great honor, becomes a target for abuse and persecution during China's Cultural Revolution due to their mixed heritage and possessions. A 2023 Batchelder Honor Book.

Freewater. By Amina Luqman-Dawson. Little, Brown, $16.99 (9780316056618).

A lyrical narrative tells the story of several children who escape slavery to discover freedom among a community of formerly enslaved Black people living in the Great Dismal Swamp. The 2023 Newbery Medal winner and the 2023 Coretta Scott King Author Award winner.

Frizzy. By Claribel A. Ortega. Art by Rose Bousamra. First Second, $21.99 (9781250259622).

Tired of getting her hair straightened at the salon, Dominican American Marlene goes to her aunt for affirmation and hair care tips. This graphic novel challenges societal beauty standards while celebrating naturally curly hair. The 2023 Pura Belpré Children's Author Award winner and a 2023 Top 10 Great Graphic Novels for Teens.

Jennifer Chan Is Not Alone. By Tae Keller. Random, $17.99 (9780593310526).

When UFO-obsessed Jennifer Chan disappears after "the Incident," Mallory feels partly responsible and begins to search for her in this sensitive examination of the complex social dynamics of middle-school bullying.

Just a Girl: A True Story of World War II. By Lia Levi. Illus. by Jess Mason. Tr. by Sylvia Notini. Harper, $16.99 (9780063065086).

During Mussolini's reign, Lia and her family leave their home because of the persecution of Jews. In this work based on her adult memoir, Levi retells her story through the eyes of a child experiencing racism and hatred of Jews during the period. The 2023 Mildred L. Batchelder Award winner.

Last Mapmaker. By Christina Soontornvat. Candlewick, $17.99 (9781536204957).

A mapmaker's apprentice, Sai, joins a group of explorers on a journey to map unexplored territories. Filled with secrets and double-crossing, this seafaring adventure follows Sai as she charts a new path to her destiny. A 2023 Newbery Honor Book and a 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

Little Monarchs. By Jonathan Case. Art by the author. Holiday/Margaret Ferguson, $22.99 (9780823442607).

In a postapocalyptic future where sun exposure is deadly to mammals, Elvie and her caretaker follow migrating monarch butterflies as they try to develop a vaccine that will protect humanity for good.

Love in the Library. By Maggie Tokuda-Hall. Illus. by Yas Imamura. Candlewick, $18.99 (9781536204308).

Tokuda-Hall draws upon her grandparents' experiences during WWII in this tender picture book, which sees Tama and George fall in love while imprisoned in a Japanese American incarceration camp.

Maizy Chen's Last Chance. By Lisa Yee. Random, $16.99 (9781984830258).

As Maizy gets to know her ailing grandfather and helps run the family's Chinese restaurant during an unplanned summer in Minnesota, she also discovers her family history and fights racial prejudice. The 2023 Asian/Pacific American Award for Children's Literature winner and a 2023 Newbery Honor Book.

Odder. By Katherine Applegate. Illus. by Charles Santoso. Feiwel and Friends, $16.99 (9781250147424).

Inspired by true events, this novel in verse tells of a curious sea otter who is rehabilitated after nearly dying. Unfit for life in the wild, she begins to foster orphaned otter pups.

The Ogress and the Orphans. By Kelly Barnhill. Algonquin, $19.95 (9781643750743).

An ogress joins forces with a group of orphans to bring love and compassion back to their town after years of apathy left a devastating mark. A 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

On the Move: Home Is Where You Find It. By Michael Rosen. Illus. by Quentin Blake. Candlewick, $17.99 (9781536218107).

In this poetic meditation on human migration, Rosen connects his Polish Jewish family's history of loss and escape during the Holocaust with contemporary refugee and migrant experiences.

Out of the Shadows: How Lotte Reiniger Made the First Animated Fairytale Movie. By Fiona Robinson. Illus. by the author. Abrams, $18.99 (9781419740855).

Using cut-paper illustrations, this account covers the early life and career of Lotte Reiniger, who created the first feature-length animated film using a similar art technique.

Phenomenal AOC: The Roots and Rise of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. By Anika Aldamuy Denise. Illus. by Loris Lora. Harper, $18.99 (9780063113749).

Tracing her journey from the Bronx to the Capitol Building, this inspiring biography of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the country's youngest congresswoman, reminds readers of their own ability to make a difference. A 2023 Pura Belpré Illustrator Honor Book.

A River's Gifts: The Mighty Elwha River Reborn. By Patricia Newman. Illus. by Natasha Donovan. Lerner/Millbrook, $31.99 (9781541598706).

A century after the damming of the Elwha River, members of the negatively impacted Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe and activists joined forces to remove the dams and restore the local ecosystem.

A Rover's Story. By Jasmine Warga. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray, $17.99 (9780063113923).

Told through multiple viewpoints, this tale of emotional rover Resilience's mission to Mars will keep readers with an interest in STEM on the edge of their seats.

The Secret Battle of Evan Pao. By Wendy Wan-Long Shang. Scholastic, $17.99 (9781338678857).

When Evan Pao moves to a Virginia town where everyone is obsessed with the Civil War, his research into Chinese American history sparks classroom conversations surrounding systemic racism.

Seeking Freedom: The Untold Story of Fortress Monroe and the Ending of Slavery in America. By Selene Castrovilla. Illus. by E. B. Lewis. Astra/Calkins Creek, $18.99 (9781635925821).

This little-known Civil War story celebrates formerly enslaved fugitive George Scott, whose courageous acts helped the Union army defeat Confederate soldiers at Fortress Monroe.

Seen and Unseen: What Dorothea Lange, Toyo Miyatake, and Ansel Adams's Photographs Reveal about the Japanese American Incarceration. By Elizabeth Partridge. Illus. by Lauren Tamaki. Chronicle, $21.99 (9781452165103).

In an account that masterfully combines text and illustration, the works of three different photographers are used to showcase and examine the unjust incarceration of Japanese and Japanese American people during WWII. The 2023 Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award winner.

Smaller Sister. By Maggie Edkins Willis. Art by the author. Roaring Brook, $22.99 (9781250767417).

When Lucy's big sister develops an eating disorder, it has a profound effect on the whole family. This graphic novel explores disordered eating, adolescence, and sisterhood with empathy, honesty, and humor.

Srta. Quinces. By Kat Fajardo. Art by the author. Scholastic/Graphix, paper, $12.99 (9781338535655).

Fifteen-year-old Suyapa/Sue is not looking forward to summer away from friends in rural Honduras, much less celebrating her quinceañera. This coming-of-age graphic novel is a celebration of self-acceptance and embracing cultural tradition. A 2023 Pura Belpré Illustrator Honor Book.

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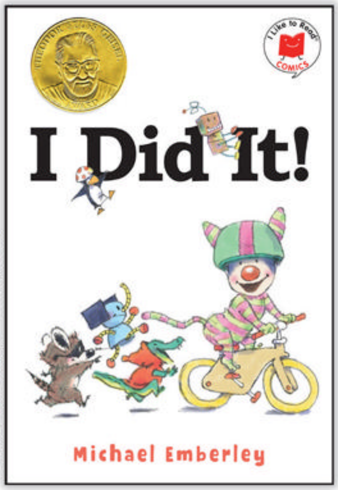
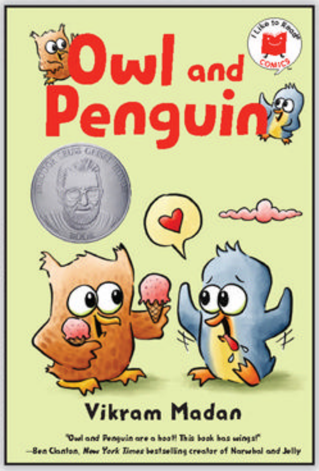
I Like to Read® Comics


I Did It!
Michael Emberley

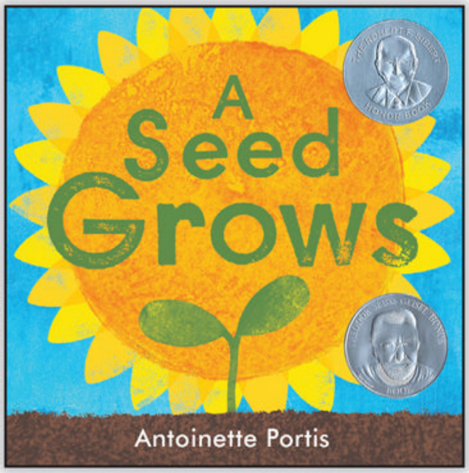
Winner of the Theodor Seuss Geisel Medal
MICHAEL EMBERLEY
ALA Notable Children's Book

I Like to Read® Comics


Owl and Penguin
Vikram Madan
"Owl and Penguin are a hoot! This book has wings!"
—Ben Clanton, New York Times bestselling creator of Narwhal and Jelly

Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor Book
ALA Notable Children's Book
VIKRAM MADAN

Neal Porter Books


A Seed Grows
Antoinette Portis

Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor Book
Robert F. Sibert Informational Honor Book
ALA Notable Children's Book
ANTOINETTE PORTIS

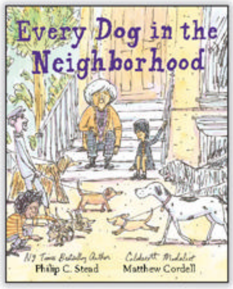
Peachtree Teen

The New York Times Bestseller
Andrew Joseph White
Hell Followed With Us
Finalist

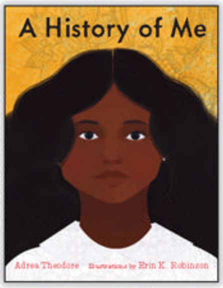
William C. Morris YA
Debut Finalist
ANDREW JOSEPH WHITE

More ALA Notable Children's Books

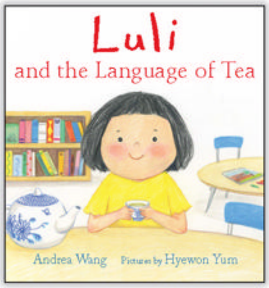
Neal Porter Books


Every Dog in the Neighborhood
Philip C. Stead
Matthew Cordell

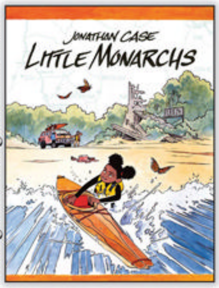
Neal Porter Books


A History of Me
Adrea Theodore
Erin K. Robinson

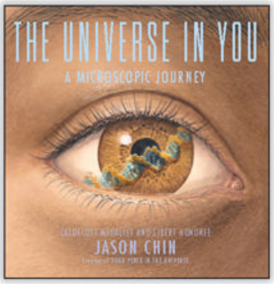
Neal Porter Books


Luli and the Language of Tea
Andrea Wang
Pictures by Hyewon Yum

Margaret Ferguson Books


Jonathan Case
Little Monarchs

Neal Porter Books


The Universe in You
A Microscopic Journey
Jason Chin

HolidayHouse.com
PeachtreeBooks.com

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Top 10 Great Graphic Novels for Teens, 2023

The Great Graphic Novels for Teens list is compiled annually by a committee of the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and comprises recommended graphic novels for readers ages 12 to 18. The titles below make up the top 10 picks from the full list, which is available at ala.org/yalsa/2023-great-graphic-novels-teens. Titles published in 2021 are noted; all others were published in 2022.

Free Speech Handbook: A Practical Framework for Understanding Our Free Speech Protections. By Ian Rosenberg. Art by Mike Cavallaro. 2021. First Second, $28.99 (9781250619754). General Adult.

A nonfiction graphic work covering 10 historical cases and their impact on modern-day questions about free speech in the U.S.

Frieren: Beyond Journey's End. By Kanehito Yamada. Art by Tsukasa Abe.

- **v.1.** 2021. VIZ, paper, $9.99 (9781974725762). General Adult.
- **v.2.** VIZ, paper, $9.99 (9781974727230). General Adult.
- **v.3.** VIZ, paper, $9.99 (9781974727247). General Adult.
- **v.4.** VIZ, paper, $9.99 (9781974727254). General Adult.
- **v.5.** VIZ, paper, $9.99 (9781974730070). General Adult.
- **v.6.** VIZ, paper, $9.99 (9781974734009). General Adult.

The adventures of elf mage Frieren, who must form a new party to fight the Demon King she vanquished with her former allies over half a century ago.

Frizzy. By Claribel A. Ortega. Art by Rose Bousamra. First Second, paper, $12.99 (9781250259639). Gr. 4–6.

With a little help from Tia Ruby and bestie Camila, Marlene learns to care for—and love—her naturally curly hair. The 2023 Pura Belpré Children's Author Award winner and a 2023 Notable Children's Book.

Huda F Are You? By Huda Fahmy. Art by the author. 2021. Dial, paper, $14.99 (9780593324318). Gr. 7–9.

Huda's family moves to Dearborn, Michigan, where she grapples with finding her identity among family and peers as *the* "hijabi girl" becomes just one of many Muslim teens at school.

Mamo, v.1. By Sam Milledge. Art by the author. Boom! Studios, paper, $14.99 (9781684158171). Gr. 4–6.

Teenager Jo asks reluctant hedge witch Orla for help in the wake of strange supernatural occurrences happening in their sleepy hometown.

Other Ever Afters: New Queer Fairy Tales. By Melanie Gillman. Art by the author. RH Graphic, paper, $17.99 (9780593303184). Gr. 7–9.

This collection of new and familiar fairy tales features queer protagonists who challenge the traditional happy ending.

Our Colors. By Gengoroh Tagame. Art by the author. Pantheon, $32.50 (9781524748562). General Adult. 741.5952.

High-school student Sora struggles with hiding his identity as a gay teen until he meets a new and inspiring mentor.

Scout Is Not a Band Kid. By Jade Armstrong. Art by the author. RH Graphic, paper, $12.99 (9780593176221). Gr. 4–6.

Joining the school band might be the only way Scout can meet her favorite author at the Almonte Festival. How long can she fake playing the trombone?

Superman Son of Kal-El, v.1: The Truth. By Tom Taylor. Art by John Timms. DC Comics, $24.99 (9781779515322). General Adult.

Jonathan Kent replaces his father, Clark, as Superman and must learn to balance fighting justice, being Superman, and being himself.

Welcome to St. Hell: My Trans Teen Misadventure. By Lewis Hancox. Art by the author. Graphix, paper, $14.99 (9781338824438). Gr. 7–9.

A biographical walk through a trans teen's high school years at the aptly named St. Hell.

Swim Team. By Johnnie Christmas. Art by the author. HarperAlley, $21.99 (9780063056770).

Using a blue palette and intergenerational storytelling, this graphic novel follows Bree as she becomes empowered as a swimmer and learns about the racism that historically prevented Black Americans from participating in this sport. A 2023 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Book and a 2023 Top 10 Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers.

Those Kids from Fawn Creek. By Erin Entrada Kelly. Greenwillow, $17.99 (9780062970350).

When a new kid comes to the sleepy town of Fawn Creek, the small, close-knit, seventh-grade class discovers what it means to be yourself and how to be a friend.

Tumble. By Celia C. Pérez. Penguin/Kokila, $17.99 (9780593325179).

When 12-year-old Addie's stepfather asks to adopt her, she sets out to discover the mystery of her father's famous luchador family and learns more about herself along the way. A 2023 Pura Belpré Children's Author Honor Book.

The Universe in You. By Jason Chin. Illus. by the author. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823450701).

Stunning, detailed illustrations matched with fact-filled text transport readers into the microscopic building blocks of life, including cells, nuclei, and elementary particles.

Violet and Jobie in the Wild. By Lynne Rae Perkins. Illus. by the author. Greenwillow, $16.99 (9780062499691).

When indoor mouse siblings are dropped off in a state park to fend for themselves, they learn how to survive and forge important friendships with the other animals.

Older Readers

Ain't Burned All the Bright. By Jason Reynolds. Illus. by Jason Griffin. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy, $19.99 (9781534439467).

An interplay of poetry and art showcases a Black family during the first summer of COVID-19 pandemic. In three breaths, the teen narrator describes how his family copes with the challenges of that time. A 2023 Caldecott Honor Book and a 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

American Murderer: The Parasite That Haunted the South. By Gail Jarrow. Astra/Calkins Creek, $24.99 (9781684378159).

This thoroughly researched and engaging history details the discovery and treatment of devastating cases of hookworm in the southern U.S. in the early twentieth century. A 2023 YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults finalist.

The Bluest Sky. By Christina Diaz Gonzalez. Knopf, $17.99 (9780593372791).

With his abuela in a high political position, Hector lives comfortably in Cuba and is surprised to learn his mother plans for their family to flee the country when Castro opens the port of Mariel.

Caprice. By Coe Booth. Scholastic, $17.99 (9780545933346).

When an incident at summer camp triggers repressed traumatic memories, Caprice endeavors to garner support from her community center and family and express her needs through tough conversations and poetry.

The Door of No Return. By Kwame Alexander. Little, Brown, $17.99 (9780316441865).

Kofi, an Asante boy in 1860s Africa, loves to swim and listen to his grandfather's stories. But when his brother accidentally kills a prince, Kofi is kidnapped and his future is forever changed. A 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

How to Build a Human: In Seven Evolutionary Steps. By Pamela S. Turner. Illus. by John Gurche. Charlesbridge, $21.99 (9781623542504).

With a humorous, conversational tone, this informative and accessible account describes the seven evolutionary steps that brought humans to where we are today.

I Must Betray You. By Ruta Sepetys. Philomel, $18.99 (9781984836038).

In 1989 Communist Romania, 17-year-old Cristian Florescu struggles to live his life and protect his secrets without hurting those he loves most. A 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

In the Key of Us. By Mariama J. Lockington. Farrar, $16.99 (9780374314101).

Told in alternating perspectives, this novel follows two Black girls who connect at music camp and help each other through parental loss, family pressures, and mental-health struggles. A 2023 Stonewall Honor Book.

Iveliz Explains It All. By Andrea Beatriz Arango. Illus. by Alyssa Bermudez. Random, $16.99 (9780593563977).

Iveliz's thoughts and emotions are revealed in poignant, candid diary entries that chronicle her experiences with grief, relationships, bullying, and family conflict. A 2023 Newbery Honor Book and a 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

The Patron Thief of Bread. By Lindsay Eagar. Candlewick, $19.99 (9781536204681).

Part of a roving gang of street urchins, Duck sets out to prove her worth by posing as a baker's apprentice. She soon realizes there is more to life and family than what she's always known.

The Road to After. By Rebekah Lowell. Illus. by the author. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, $16.99 (9780593109618).

Told in verse, this moving novel follows Lacey and her family as they figure out what comes next after escaping from domestic abuse.

Star Child: A Biographical Constellation of Octavia Estelle Butler. By Ibi Zoboi. Dutton, $16.99 (9780399187384).

In poetry and prose framed around themes of stars and the universe, Zoboi tells the story of the singular and visionary sf writer Octavia Estelle Butler. A 2023 Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book.

Victory. Stand! Raising My Fist for Justice. By Tommie Smith and Derrick Barnes. Art by Dawud Anyabwile. Norton/Young Readers, $22.95 (9781324003908).

This boldly illustrated, black-and-white graphic autobiography tells the story of athlete and scholar Smith's journey to Olympic gold and his choice to raise his fist in protest of racial discrimination. The 2023 YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction winner, a 2023 Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book, and a 2023 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Book.

All Ages

Blue: A History of the Color as Deep as the Sea and as Wide as the Sky. By Nana Ekua Brew-Hammond. Illus. by Daniel Minter. Knopf, $18.99 (9781984894366).

The long and complex history of the color blue, once so difficult to acquire, is explored through stunning acrylic illustrations and easy-to-read, descriptive text.

Isla to Island. By Alexis Castellanos. Art by the author. Atheneum, $21.99 (9781534469242).

In this nearly wordless graphic novel, Marisol's world loses its color when she must emigrate alone to New York City. However, she rediscovers brightness in books, flowers, and food.

Killer Underwear Invasion! How to Spot Fake News, Disinformation & Conspiracy Theories. By Elise Gravel. Art. By the author. Chronicle, $14.99 (9781797214917).

This hilarious and informative graphic nonfiction book breaks down media literacy in an accessible, kid-friendly way.

Marshmallow Clouds: Two Poets at Play among Figures of Speech. By Ted Kooser and Connie Wanek. Illus. by Richard Jones. Candlewick, $19.99 (9781536203035).

In sections based on the four elements, this poetry collection sees two poets employ figures of speech to playfully explore and reimagine everyday objects and the natural world.

The Real Dada Mother Goose: A Treasury of Complete Nonsense. By Jon Scieszka. Illus. by Julia Rothman. Candlewick, $19.99 (9780763694340).

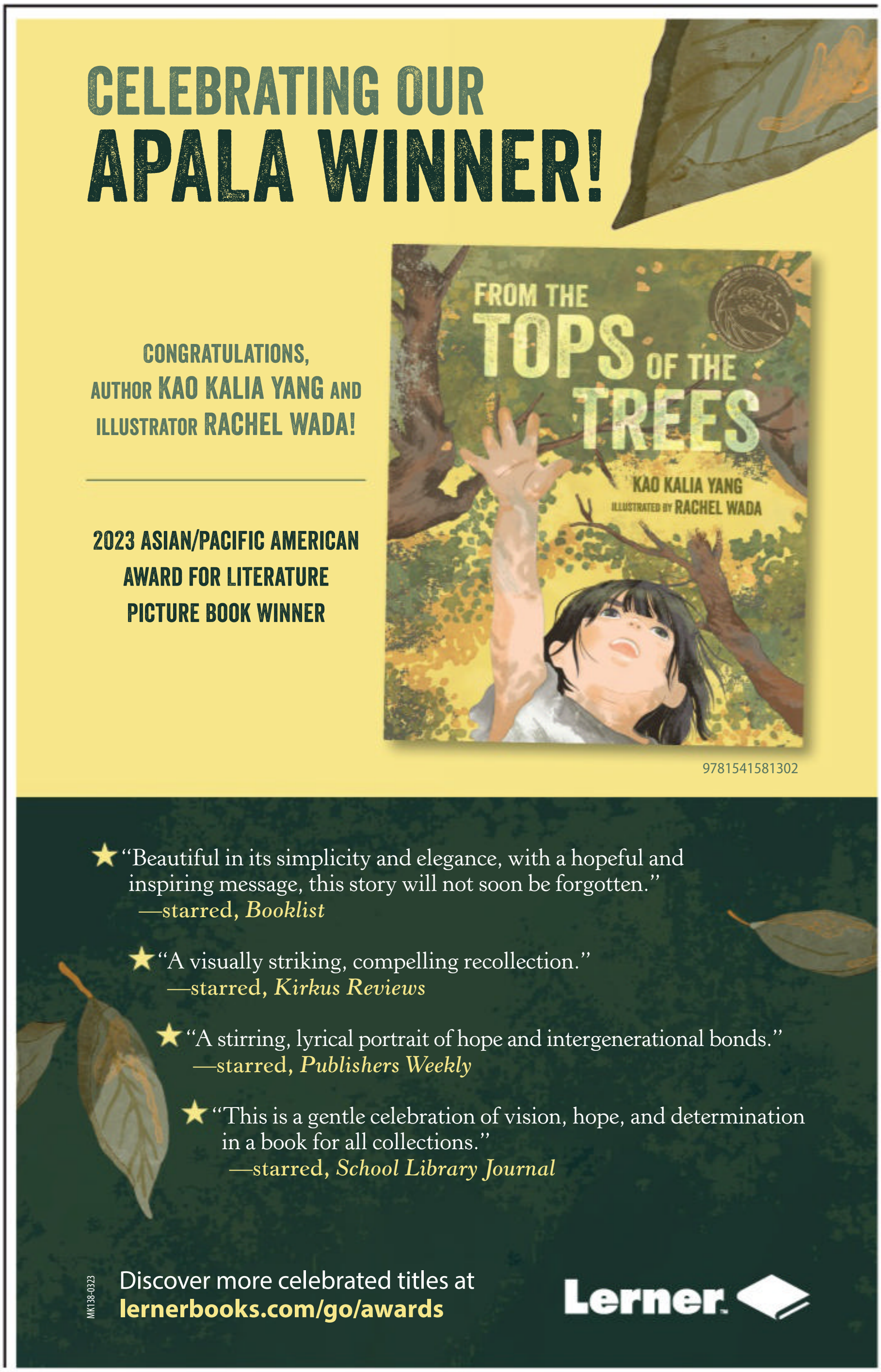
Using clever wordplay, Scieszka turns Mother Goose rhymes on their head Dada-style in a humorous work that encourages readers to continue the fun on their own.

Standing in the Need of Prayer: A Modern Retelling of the Classic Spiritual. By Carole Boston Weatherford. Illus. by Frank Morrison. Crown, $18.99 (9780593306345).

Taking inspiration from the classic African American spiritual, this picture book rendition highlights moments in Black history and the resilience of the Black community. The 2023 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Book Award winner.

Rainbow List, 2023

The Rainbow Round Table and the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association are pleased to offer the 2023 Rainbow Project bibliography of recommended titles for youth from birth to age 18 that contain significant


CELEBRATING OUR
APALA WINNER!

CONGRATULATIONS,
AUTHOR KAO KALIA YANG AND
ILLUSTRATOR RACHEL WADA!

2023 ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN
AWARD FOR LITERATURE
PICTURE BOOK WINNER

9781541581302

★ "Beautiful in its simplicity and elegance, with a hopeful and inspiring message, this story will not soon be forgotten."
—starred, *Booklist*

★ "A visually striking, compelling recollection."
—starred, *Kirkus Reviews*

★ "A stirring, lyrical portrait of hope and intergenerational bonds."
—starred, *Publishers Weekly*

★ "This is a gentle celebration of vision, hope, and determination in a book for all collections."
—starred, *School Library Journal*

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and authentic gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (GLBTQ) content. Titles published in late 2021 are noted; all others were published in 2022. Below are 20 exceptional choices from the list. For the complete list, visit glbtrt.ala.org/rainbowbooks/archives/1444.

Rainbow List Top 10 Titles for Young Readers

Artie and the Wolf Moon. By Olivia Stephens. Art by the author. 2021. Graphic Universe, paper, $16.99 (9781728420202). Gr. 6–10.

Artie is excited to discover she comes from a family of werewolves. Her mom relies on their community to help Artie learn about being a werewolf and her father.

Bathe the Cat. By Alice B. McGinty. Illus. by David Roberts. Chronicle, $17.99 (9781452142708). PreS–Gr. 1.

Grandma's coming for a visit, so everyone needs to pitch in. But somehow, the list of chores keeps getting mixed up in ridiculous combinations. A silly rhyming read featuring a mixed family with two dads. A 2023 Notable Children's Book.

Mama and Mommy and Me in the Middle. By Nina LaCour. Illus. by Kaylani Juanita. Candlewick, $17.99 (9781536211511). PreS–Gr. 2.

A little girl has to deal with the loneliness she feels when Mommy goes away on a trip. No matter what fun things she and Mama do, the wait for Mommy to come back feels like forever.

A Song for the Unsung: Bayard Rustin, the Man behind the 1963 March on Washington. By Carole Boston Weatherford and Rob Sanders. Illus. by Byron McCray. Holt, $19.99 (9781250779502). Gr. 2–5.

A biography about Bayard Rustin, the gay Black man who organized the March on Washington in 1963.

The Civil War of Amos Abernathy. By Michael Leali. Harper, $16.99 (9780063119864). Gr. 3–6.

History buff and reenactor Amos has a chance to create a new exhibit for the living-history park where he volunteers. When he discovers the story of Albert Cashier, a transgender Civil War soldier, he makes it his mission to bring attention to little-known LGBTQIA+ people from history.

Different Kinds of Fruit. By Kyle Lukoff. Dial, $17.99 (9780593111185). Gr. 4–7.

Annabelle quickly befriends new kid, Bailey, when they join her sixth-grade class, but when Bailey meets Annabelle's parents, Annabelle is shocked at how rude her parents are. Annabelle fears her parents are transphobic, but in truth, her father may have more in common with Bailey than Annabelle thinks.

Ellen outside the Lines. By A. J. Sass. Little, Brown, $16.99 (9780759556270). Gr. 4–7.

Ellen, who's autistic, functions best when there are no surprises, so when the itinerary for a school trip to Barcelona changes and she finds herself separated from her best friend, Ellen struggles to cope. Yet, meeting new friends, especially her new nonbinary classmate, provides Ellen with opportunities to expand her world and learn more about herself. A 2023 Sydney Taylor Silver Medalist.

Moonflower. By Kacen Callender. Scholastic, $17.99 (9781338636598). Gr. 4–7.

Moon escapes their crushing depression each night by journeying into the spirit world, where they explore new dimensions. In our world, Moon struggles with their mom's frustration with their nonverbal sadness, therapy that feels useless, and their new class, where they are haunted by memories of past bullying.

Tiger Honor. By Yoon Ha Lee. Disney/Rick Riordan Presents, $16.99 (9781368055543). Gr. 3–7.

After Sebin gets accepted into the Space Forces in hopes of becoming a battle-cruiser captain like their uncle, their ship is taken hostage. They must rise to the occasion to restore their family's honor, in this action-packed sci-fi adventure inspired by Korean mythology.

You Only Live Once, David Bravo. By Mark Oshiro. Harper, $16.99 (9780063008151). Gr. 3–6.

David is cursed. As he struggles his way through middle school and searches for how to describe his transracial adoption to his peers, David finally wishes for a do-over. Yet, he really didn't think it would come true, especially in the form of a time line–traveling, talking dog named Fea.

Rainbow List Top 10 Titles for Teen Readers

The City Beautiful. By Aden Polydoros. 2021. Harlequin/Inkyard, $19.99 (9781335402509). Gr. 9–12.

Alter Rosen lives in Chicago's Jewish community during the 1893 World's Fair. When a friend and roommate, Yakov, turns up dead, Alter is possessed by his dybbuk and must team up with a boy from his past to investigate the string of missing Jewish boys to save both the neighborhood and himself.

The Honeys. By Ryan La Sala. Scholastic/Push, $18.99 (9781338745313). Gr. 9–12.

Genderfluid teen Mars is haunted by the violent death of his twin sister, Caroline, and he enrolls in the elite summer camp she attended to find out why she died. He's convinced the Honeys, the glamorous girls who attend to the camp beehives, know more than they're saying, but as the summer wears on, Mars finds that while he's distrustful of the Honeys, he still wants to be one. A 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

Just Ash. By Sol Santana. 2021. Carolrhoda, $18.99 (9781541599246). Gr. 9–12.

Ash has always known he is intersex, but it's never been an issue. He knows he's a boy and was even raised as one. But when 16-year-old Ash suddenly gets his first period during soccer practice, his parents and pediatrician all say that Ash needs to live as a girl. Now Ash feels like he's in the wrong skin, forced to present as a girl and bullied by his classmates.

Loveless. By Alice Oseman. Scholastic, $18.99 (9781338751932). Gr. 9–12.

After a disastrous prom night, Georgia is determined to find love at university. But Georgia has never been in love before; she hasn't even had her first kiss! Unsure of what kind of person she's attracted to, Georgia starts to date one of her best friends, Jason, only to discover she is aromantic and asexual. A 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

The Many Half-Lived Lives of Sam Sylvester. By Maya MacGregor. Astra/Astra Young Readers, $17.99 (9781635923599). Gr. 9–12.

After nearly being killed by their schoolmates in a hate-motivated assault, autistic, nonbinary Sam starts over at a new school in a new state. However, their fascination with the "half-lived lives" of people who died before age 19 only grows as they move into a house where a teenage boy mysteriously died 30 years ago.

Nothing Burns as Bright as You. By Ashley Woodfolk. HarperCollins/Versify, $18.99 (9780358655350). Gr. 9–12.

Told in memories over the course of one tumultuous day, this is the story of female friendship, first love, and personal reflection as the narrator learns that all decisions have consequences. A 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

Queer Ducks (and Other Animals): The Natural World of Animal Sexuality. By Eliot Schrefer. Illus. by Jules Zuckerberg. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, $17.99 (9780063069497). Gr. 9–12.

Queer behavior is completely natural and can be found throughout the animal kingdom. This title dives into research on same-sex sexual attraction between various animals. Written with humor, this informative text is interspersed with comics of queer animals. A 2023 Printz Honor Book.

The Summer of Bitter and Sweet. By Jen Ferguson. HarperCollins/Heartdrum, $17.99 (9780063086166). Gr. 9–12.

Lou, a Métis teen in Canada, is working for the summer at her family's ice cream shop with both her ex and her former friend King. As she deals with threatening letters from her biological father, repairs her friendship with King, and confronts her past, can Lou learn to open up and ask for help? A 2023 Morris Award finalist, a 2023 Stonewall Honor Book, and a 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

The Sunbearer Trials. By Aiden Thomas. 2022. Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250822130). Gr. 8–12.

To make sure that Sol can continue to travel the skies and protect people from the evil Obsidian gods, The Sunbearer Trials are held, and the loser is sacrificed. When Teo, the trans son of Quetzal and a Jade, is unexpectedly selected to compete along with another Jade against the typical Gold heroes, they must both fight for their lives. A 2023 Best Fiction for Young Adults.

When You Call My Name. By Tucker Shaw. 2022. Holt, $17.99 (9781250624864). Gr. 9–12.

At the height of the AIDS crisis in New York City, Adam and Callum fall in love. At least that's what Adam thinks. When Callum disappears, heartbroken Adam is unsure of what went wrong, until he finds Callum in a hospital for those with HIV and AIDS.

Notable Children's Recordings, 2023

The Notable Children's Recordings list is selected by a committee of the Association for Library Service to Children. It includes recordings for children 14 years of age and younger of especially commendable quality that demonstrate respect for young people's intelligence and imagination, exhibit venturesome creativity, and reflect and encourage the interests of children and young adolescents in exemplary ways. An asterisk indicates an Odyssey Winner or Honor title; see the Odyssey list for annotations. Items are 2022 releases and downloads unless otherwise indicated.

A Is for Oboe: The Orchestra's Alphabet. By Lera Auerback, Marilyn Nelson. Read by Thomas Quasthoff. 1hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593346228). Gr. 1–5

A poet and a composer have creatively teamed up to present the orchestra's world through verse. This audio version of the picture book combines the deep, expressive voice of Thomas Quasthoff with musical accompaniments to illustrate the instruments and vocabulary for each verse. From the sound of a single instrument to the whole orchestra, the audio presents a much richer version of this book.

Ain't Burned All the Bright. By Jason Reynolds. Take One read by Jason Reynolds. Take Two read by a full cast. 5hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797137544). Gr. 6+

What does it really mean to breathe? In this poem told in three parts, Jason Reynolds explores what it means to be Black in America in 2022. Listeners get to experience this piece twice, read once by Reynolds and a second time by a full cast. Each retelling brings something different to the story but both use the rhythm of spoken word to bring this poetry to life.

Boys Will Be Human. By Justin Baldoni. Read by the author. 7hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063067233). Gr 6+

Raw, vulnerable, and intimate, this nonfiction book read by the author about what it means to grow up draws the listener into the conversation. Despite the sometimes-difficult topics presented, personal anecdotes and a willingness to be silly create a comfortable atmosphere that keeps the audiobook authentic and honest.

Coraline. By Neil Gaiman. Read by a full cast. 3.5hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063243255). Gr. 4+

When Coraline ventures through a mysterious door to find an uncanny version of her own home, she must use all her courage and cleverness to escape from this Other world. Gaiman's beloved text is given new life in this full-cast recording in which each narrator, perfectly cast, captures both the story's magic and its true horror.

Daughter of the White Rose. By Diane Zahler. Read by a full cast. 7hr. Live Oak Media, DD (9781430144823). Gr. 4–7

Set in medieval England during the reign of King Edward IV, this historical-fiction narrative follows a common girl's friendship with the young prince born on the same day as her. The full-cast narration enhances the story as the listener becomes immersed in the world of royalty, intrigue, and betrayal.

Drita, My Homegirl. By Jenny Lombard. Read by Carlotta Grentan and Jeanette Illidge. 3hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593587676). Gr. 4+

Drita and her family flee war-torn Kosovo for America with dreams but face struggles to adapt and fit in. Two skilled narrators use authentic accents and respectful dialects to help listeners navigate between main and secondary characters in this novel of friendship, culture, and survival.

***The First Helping** (Lunch Lady Books 1 & 2). By Jarrett J. Krosoczka. Read by a full cast. 1hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593397145). K–Gr. 3

The first two books in Krosoczka's beloved Lunch Lady graphic-novel series get a refresh in this hilarious and cleverly adapted audiobook. An immersive soundscape and a talented full cast of narrators capture the energy and spirit of the books readers already know and love. (2023 Odyssey Honor)

Gallant. By V. E. Schwab. Read by Julian Rhind-Tutt. 7.75hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063220751). Gr. 6+

As in a Vincent Price movie, the listener is drawn into this eerie tale through the effective and creative use of voice, pauses, and pace. The tone of the gripping story of a girl trying to solve the mysteries of her family's past comes through, capturing and holding the attention of the listener.

***Inheritance:** A Visual Poem. By Elizabeth Acevedo. Read by the author. 0.5hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063250390). Gr. 8+

With dynamic narration and exquisite emotional resonance, Acevedo's poetic performance celebrates the multidimensional subject of Black hair in the context of the author's Dominican identity. (2023 Odyssey Honor)

Isaiah Dunn Saves the Day. By Kelly J. Baptist. Read by Adam Lazarre-White. 5hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593560228). Gr. 4–7

This versatile, talented narrator brings Isaiah's start of middle school to life through a culturally authentic use of tone, pace, and intonation. This sequel to *Isaiah Dunn Is My Hero* stands on its own.

Kapaemahu. By Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, Dean Hammer, and Joe Wilson. Read by Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu. 5hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593605929). Gr. 2–6

This bilingual recording is an ode to a fifteenth-century Indigenous Hawaiian legend about healing and the Mahu people with a dual male and female spirit. A rich soundscape and poignant narration enrich and extend the engaging text.

Listen: How Evelyn Glennie, A Deaf Girl, Changed Percussion. By Shannon Stocker. Narrated by Elle Newlands. 17m. Listening Library, DD (9780593508985). PreS–Gr. 2

This picture-book biography of a deaf girl who made her life about percussion is beautifully presented. Supported by a dynamic soundscape, the narrator effectively uses her voice in both the story line and the distinct vocables.

Max and the Midknights and the Tower of Time. By Lincoln Peirce. Read by a full cast. 3hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593505601). Gr. 3–7

The medieval tale of a knight-in-training continues with book 3 of the Max and the Midknights series as Max strives to find her twin. The full cast, with each reader distinct and talented, creates what feels like a cinematic experience, often inviting listeners to participate with humor and interactivity.

Mel Fell. By Corey R. Tabor. Illustrated by the author. Read by Noah Wall. 5.5m. Weston Woods, CD and book (9781338837971). PreS–K

Upbeat background music complements Mel the kingfisher's leap of faith, bringing it to life. As the stakes rise, so does the tempo and intensity of the music. The narrator's outstanding vocals capture an excited bird's story.

Onyeka and the Academy of the Sun. By Tolá Okogwu. Read by Nneka Okoye. 7.5hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797148953). Gr. 4+

Onyeka's unruly afro has always made her feel different, but when she learns that it has psychokinetic superpowers, everything changes. Nneka Okoye deftly switches between British and Nigerian accents, even using Pidgin English, adding authentic flair for listeners that pulls them even further into this story of self-discovery and acceptance.

The Patron Thief of Bread. By Lindsay Eager. Read by Moira Quirk. 12.5hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593632291). Gr. 6+

Moira Quirk's nuanced performance brings to life a large cast of characters, including a group of street urchins, a young thief turned baker's apprentice, and a grumpy gargoyle who watches them all from a cathedral high above their medieval town.

The Peach Rebellion. By Wendelin Van Draanen. Narrated by Emily Ellet and Lauri Jo Daniels.12h. Listening Library, DD (9780593584996). Gr. 8+

This story of childhood friends coming of age in the years following the Great Depression is brought to life by dual narrators who fully embody the young heroines. This recording captures issues of class, young love, and adolescence with the talents of two skilled performers.

The Rainbow Parade. By Emily Neilson. Read by the author. 7m. Listening Library, DD (9780593593486). Gr. PreS–2

With perfect pacing, a rich soundscape, and lively narration, this joyful recording celebrates the LGBTQ+ community as a girl marches in a Pride parade with her two moms for the first time. Based on the author's experience.

Real Pigeons Eat Danger (Book 2). By Andrew McDonald. Read by Sean Kenin Elias-Reyes. 2.75hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593560068). Gr. 2–6

Elias-Reyes presents a performance that immerses the listener in the adventures of a group of crime-fighting pigeons. Through effective vocal characterizations as well as balanced music and sound effects, the audio carries the story along as the pigeons work to solve cases in their park neighborhood.

The Road to After. By Rebekah Lowell. Read by Elena Rey. 2.5hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593590287). Gr. 6+

Rey's authentic narration chronicles 11-year-old Lacey's life as she, her sisters, and her mother flee their home after years living with domestic violence. With raw vulnerability, this nuanced performance sensitively captures a story of pain, trauma, and hope for renewal and recovery.

Rules for Vampires. By Alex Foulkes. Read by Kristin Atherton. 2021. 9hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797134499). Gr. 4–7

The narrator's vocal range captures Eleonora's Birthnight perfectly. With a wide range of accents, this recording expands and elevates the text. A tale of vampires that is not canned or overdone.

Standing in the Need of Prayer. By Carol Boston Weatherford. Read and sung by the author. 19m. Listening Library, DD (9780593613702). Gr. 1–4

This retelling of the classic spiritual incorporates struggles and triumphs of African American history and is presented in a careful, authentic, and dynamic way by the author. Accented throughout by deliberately selected background music, the text is elevated when the author sings at the conclusion of the book in a beautifully personal way.

***Stuntboy, in the Meantime.** By Jason Reynolds. Read by a full cast. 2021. 2hr 47m. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781508246237). Gr. 2–6

Portico's adventures in his apartment building are brought to life in a dynamic and playful way that transports the listener in this high-energy and thrilling chapter book. With a full cast and a soundscape that blends seamlessly with the narration, listeners will not be able to help being drawn into the fun. (2023 Odyssey Award for Children)

This Is Music: Drums. By Rekha S. Rajan. Read by the author. 7m. Listening Library, DD (9780593634530). PreS–Gr. 1
This Is Music: Horns. By Rekha S. Rajan. Read by the author. 8m. Listening Library, DD (9780593634554). PreS–Gr. 1

This introduction to a family of musical instruments for our youngest listeners is dynamic and engaging. Listeners hear the different types of instruments in the family during the introduction of the book. The sounds are then matched with the name, purpose, and other facts for each specific instrument. Listeners are invited to "name that sound" at the end of the recording.

***The Three Billy Goats Gruff.** By Mac Barnett. Read by the author. 20m. Scholastic Inc., DD (9781338897609). PreS–Gr. 2.

In a book that is filled with music, forest sounds and talented narration, Mac Barnett's ability to capture energy and humor coupled with the zestful soundscape brings this retelling of a classic folk tale to life. (2023 Odyssey Honor)

Three Strike Summer. By Skyler Schrempp. Read by the author. 7hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797148182). Gr. 5+

From dried-up farmland to the peach orchards of California, Gloria Mae and her family are barely surviving the Great Depression. This novel reveals challenges faced by 1930s crop pickers and the heart of a young girl set on playing baseball. A single narrator (the author) adeptly delivers multiple characters and emotional tension using no bells and whistles, just powerful pacing and believable Oklahoma accents.

Watercress. By Andrea Wang. Illustrated by Jason Chin. Read by Sunny Lu. 8m. Weston Woods, CD and book (9781338811216). PreS–Gr. 2.

A young girl is embarrassed when her family

The Listen List, 2023

The Listen List Council of the Collection Development and Evaluation Section (CODES) of the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) announces the 2023 Listen List: Outstanding Audiobook Narration. This award highlights extraordinary narrators and listening experiences that merit special attention by a general adult audience. All titles were released in 2022. Full annotations and listen-alikes appear online rusaupdate.org/2023/01/2023-listen-list-revealed.

The Angel of Rome. By Jess Walter. Read by Edoardo Ballerini and Julia Whelan. 8hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063246980).

Walter's stories range from poignant to slyly funny. The common elements are vivid characters and shrewd dialogue, allowing Ballerini and Whelan to showcase their exemplary narrating skills.

The Bangalore Detectives Club. By Harini Nagendra. Read by Soneela Nankani. 9hr. Blackstone Publishing, DD (9798200990108).

Newly married Kaveri uses her connections and love of science to solve a murder. The listener is immediately immersed in 1920s southern India by Nankani's wide range of characters' speech.

Book Lovers. By Emily Henry. Read by Julia Whelan. 11.5hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593553787).

Literary agent Nora experiences her own trope-flipping small-town romance. Whelan delivers spot-on characterizations and a slow burn that's steamy enough to entice the most jaded of genre-savvy listeners.

The Diamond Eye. By Kate Quinn. Read by Saskia Maarleveld. 13hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780062943538).

In this tale based on a true story, a bookish student turned feared sniper in WWII will do whatever it takes to return home to her young son. Maarleveld creates a strong sense of place with masterful accents.

An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us. By Ed Yong. Read by the author. 14hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593593554).

The author displays a passion for understanding species whose sensory experience is very different from ours. His engaging narration will appeal to a wide audience.

Iona Iverson's Rules for Commuting. By Clare Pooley. Read by Clare Corbett. 8.5hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593166079).

Advice columnist Iona feels adrift, but a medical emergency on her train collides her life with those of her fellow commuters. Corbett's narration gives this audiobook a full-cast feel and highlights the novel's quirkiness and charm.

A Lady's Guide to Fortune Hunting. By Sophie Irwin. Read by Eleanor Tomlinson. 9.5hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593590539).

Kitty Talbot seeks to marry a husband whose fortune will save her family from ruin. Tomlinson's dexterous narration adds to the characters' dimensionality and a lively recreation of nineteenth-century ambiance.

The Patron Saint of Second Chances. By Christine Simon. Read by Tim Francis. 8.5hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797137841).

The mayor of a small Italian village starts a rumor that a famous movie star is coming to town to film a major motion picture, leaving locals clamoring for roles. Francis' precise comic timing and theatricality add to the enjoyable mayhem.

Playing with Myself. By Randy Rainbow. Read by the author. 7hr. Macmillan Audio, DD (9781250806482).

The journey hasn't always been easy for this born entertainer. With his telling his own story with candor and the audio equivalent of jazz hands, this memoir will leave listeners hoping for an encore.

River of the Gods: Genius, Courage, and Betrayal in the Search for the Source of the Nile. By Candice Millard. Read by Paul Michael. 10hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780525524076).

In the 1850s, British frenemies compete to locate the source of the Nile. Their guide, Sidi Mubarak Bombay, is instrumental in their survival and success. Michael's pacing builds tension and heightens the adventure, making this work of nonfiction sound like a novel.

Stories from the Tenants Downstairs. By Sidik Fofana. Read by a full cast. 6hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797145020).

Eight residents of a high-rise in Harlem tell their intersecting stories. With gentrification looming, the tenants struggle to cling to their homes. A full cast expresses the rhythm of Fofana's dialogue and embodies the characters' joys and frustrations.

Take My Hand. By Dolen Perkins-Valdez. Read by Lauren J. Daggett. 11hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593552254).

Civil, an idealistic young Black nurse in 1970s Alabama, is horrified by the forced sterilization of poor women of color and sues her former employer. Narrating with heart and empathy, Daggett brings out the raw emotion of this story inspired by true events.

Unlikely Animals. By Annie Hartnett. Read by Mark Bramhall and Kirby Heyborne. 11hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593400661).

A chorus of ghosts observes its town with fond lamentation. Bramhall performs distinct, authentic characters and Heyborne convincingly reads the journals of a naturalist in this darkly whimsical tale.

stops to gather watercress from a roadside ditch. She has a change of heart when, over dinner, her parents share their stories of life in China. The audio, which features culturally respectful background music, elevates the text authentically and gently.

When Grandfather Flew. By Patricia MacLachlan. Illustrated by Chris Sheban. Read by Katie Schorr and George Guidall. 9m. Live Oak Media, CD and book (9781430144977). K–Gr. 3

This picture-book recording offers listeners a full sensory experience. Bird calls, sound effects, even pleasing contrasts among characters are presented by two skilled narrators who evoke this love story between a grandfather's awe and reverence for birds and his grandchildrens' affection for the man who taught them to pay attention.

Wishes. By Muon Thi Văn. Illustrated by Victo Ngai. Read by Muon Thi Văn. Music by Ernest Troost. 2021. 17m. Weston Woods, CD and book (9781338825992). PreS–Gr. 2

With subtle background music and sound effects, Văn narrates this emotional story of escape and starting over. The audio conveys the emotions of the journey and provides an immersive experience when paired with the text and illustrations.

Top 10 Amazing Audiobooks for Young Adults

YALSA's Amazing Audiobook list of 43 titles is drawn from 51 official nominations, which were posted and discussed in blog posts on The Hub, where the full list and complete annotations can be found. The list identifies notable 2022 audio recordings significant to young adults. All items are downloads.

Ain't Burned All the Bright. By Jason Reynolds. Read by the author and a full cast. 40min. Simon & Schuster Audio (9781797137544).

In ten sentences, Jason Reynolds expresses the impact of racism, police brutality, and the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic as experienced by an African American family.

All My Rage. By Sabaa Tahir. Read by a full cast. 10.5hr. Listening Library (9780593502235).

When his mother dies, Salahudin will do anything to maintain her legacy. All three narrators perform wonderfully, and it is easy to feel Salahudin and Noor's rage grow.

Azar on Fire. By Olivia Abtahi. Read by Alex McKenna. 9hr. Listening Library (9780593610305).

Azar's vocal folds and raspy voice dictate her life—until now. With the formation of an unexpected rock band, she is finally able to give a voice to her words and stretch herself in new ways.

The Door of No Return. By Kwame Alexander. Read by Kobna Holdbrook-Smith. 3.5hr. Hachette Audio (9781668616437).

Eleven-year-old Kofi is a born swimmer whose world is turned upside down by an accident involving his older brother and by strangers that have arrived in his village.

The Honeys. By Ryan La Sala. Read by Pete Cross.11hr. Scholastic Audiobooks (9781338853186).

After the sudden, violent death of their twin sister, Mars is determined to find out more about the last weeks of her life. That means returning to a place they swore they'd never set foot in again.

The Silence that Binds Us. By Joanna Ho. Read by Raechel Wong. 11.5hr. HarperAudio (9780063059375).

May can't stay silent when her older brother dies by suicide and a rich venture-capitalist blames Asian parenting. Honest, heartfelt narration on an intense and important topic.

Skin of the Sea. By Natasha Bowen. Read by Yetide Badaki. 11.5 hr. Listening Library (9780593343692).

Simi collects the souls of those who die at sea. Then disaster strikes, and she must save all of humanity. Badaki brings characters to life with depth and nuance in this *Little Mermaid* retelling.

The Sunbearer Trials. By Aiden Thomas. Read by André Santana. 13.5hr. Macmillan Audio (9781250866189).

Gold and Jade semidioses (children of gods) compete in the Sunbearer Trials, wherein the loser forfeits their life to recharge Sol's power.

Vinyl Moon. By Mahogany L. Browne. Read by Bahni Turpin. 5hr. Listening Library (9780593506462).

Angel starts to consider what she actually wants out of life and creates a home for herself in Brooklyn. Turpin lovingly provides compassion to a complex story.

The Weight of Blood. By Tiffany D. Jackson. Read by a full cast. 11hr. HarperAudio (9780063029170).

After the prom ended in flames and chaos, all the survivors could say is "Maddy did it." But how? Why? Maddy has a secret that will change Springville forever.

Odyssey Winners and Honor Audiobooks, 2023

The Odyssey Award for Excellence in Audiobook Production, jointly administered by ALSC and YALSA, and sponsored by *Booklist*, is given to the producer of the best audiobooks for children (0–14) and young adults (12–18) available in English in the United States. One winner may be selected for each age category with a single honor list comprised of titles for both age categories. The winners and honorees were announced on January 30, 2023, during the American Library Association LibLearnX Meeting.

Odyssey Award Winner for Children

Stuntboy, in the Meantime. By Jason Reynolds. Read by a full cast. Produced by Taryn Beato. 2021. 2.5hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797111797). Gr. 3–5.

Upbeat Portico shares his home and school adventures with enthusiasm, while his alter ego Stuntboy protects his neighbors and battles "The Frets." In this highly entertaining audio, exuberant sound effects, music, and a full cast led by Guy Lockard bring Stuntboy's cinematic story to life.

Odyssey Award Winner for Young Adults

The Honeys. By Ryan La Sala. Read by Pete Cross. Produced by Melissa Ellard. 2022. 10.5hr. Scholastic, DD (9781338853186). Gr. 9–12.

Struggling to find their place at an elite summer camp after a family tragedy, gender-fluid Mars discovers a gruesome revelation. Subtle yet immersive sound effects and a narration by Pete Cross that empathetically embodies the range of characters enhance this atmospheric novel.

Odyssey Award Honorees

Demon in the Wood. By Leigh Bardugo. Read by a full cast. Produced by Steve Wagner and Michelle Altman. 2022. 1hr. Macmillan Audio, DD (9781250819123). Gr. 9–12.

The graphic novel prequel to the Shadow and Bone series is artfully recreated as an exceptionally produced audio. A rich soundscape and a full cast transform this visual book into a fantastic listening experience. It is a treat for fans but it is also an entertaining stand-alone.

Inheritance. By Elizabeth Acevedo. Read by the author. Produced by Caitlin Garing. 2022. 0.5hrs. Quill Books for HarperAudio, DD (9780063250390). Gr. 6–10.

Acevedo passionately performs her spoken-word poem celebrating the complexities and the cultural legacy that hair symbolizes for her as an Afro-Dominican woman. She layers intonation, rhythm, pacing, and volume in crafting this recording, making it a dynamic addition and approachable entry point to the art form.

The First Helping (Lunch Lady Books 1 & 2. By Jarrett J. Krosoczka. Read by a full cast. Produced by Jarrett J. Krosoczka and Lauren Klein, Executive Producer Nick Martorelli. 2022. 1hr. Listening Library, CD (9780593502051). Gr. 3–7.

These graphic novels have been reimagined by author Jarrett J. Krosoczka in a full-cast audio production. The larger-than-life voices and sound effects set a perfect tone for retelling a beloved series, allowing it to be enjoyed in a new way.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff. By Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen. Read by Mac Barnett. Produced by Melissa Ellard and Paul Gagne. 2022. 10.5min. Scholastic, DD (9781338897616). PreS–Gr. 2.

Jaunty music, intermittent goat poetry, and a jubilant voicing by the author, Mac Barnett, set this audio apart. Listeners of all ages will delight in the humorous narration. This fresh audio will give librarians and caretakers something unique to bring to storytime.

Journalism & Publishing

God the Bestseller: How One Editor Transformed American Religion a Book at a Time.

By Stephen Prothero.

Mar. 2023. 384p. HarperOne, $32.99 (9780062464040); e-book (9780062464064). 070.50973.

Eugene Exman, the head of the religious books division at Harper & Brothers (later Harper & Row) for many decades, is the subject of this intriguing biography by religion scholar Prothero (*Religious Literacy*, 2008). Exman was responsible for growing the publishing company into a major force in religious publishing, moving from a few collections of sermons to best-sellers by Martin Luther King, Albert Schweitzer, Dorothy Day, Bill Wilson (founder of Alcoholics Anonymous), and more. Prothero examines the merits and flaws of the books Exman published and their authors, arguing that these books shaped the U.S. movement away from formal religion and towards a looser form of "spirituality." Simultaneously, Prothero explores the contradictions within Exman himself. After experiencing a mystical vision as a farm kid in Ohio in 1916, Exman continued to search for personal spiritual experiences, practicing meditation and experimenting with LSD while remaining a churchgoing Protestant and relishing the power and money that his position at Harper gave him. Prothero introduces readers to both a surprisingly important figure and to a number of books worth rediscovering. —*Margaret Quamme*

Philosophy & Psychology

Tell Me What You Want: A Therapist and Her Clients Explore Our 12 Deepest Desires.

By Charlotte Fox Weber.

Apr. 2023. 320p. Atria, $27.99 (9781982170660); e-book (9781982170691). 158.

Weber's debut uses her work as a psychoanalyst to unpack 12 different yet universal desires. Sandwiched by generalized observations of how each desire can hinder and inform our lives are Weber's clients' (their identities disguised) in-depth, detailed stories. This addition to an expanding genre—books that offer a safe window into the therapy of others—fascinates. Some of the stories are brutal and traumatic, and all of the stories are meaningful. Willing to join her clients in self-reflection, Weber discloses her own failings, triggers, and need for mentorship. Weber's work is also playful, with language that includes some inventions of her own and a helpful glossary in the back. Of particular power is Astrid's story in the chapter "On Connection," which begins with the author admitting her incorrect assumptions and ends with her confessing her suspicions about Astrid's happy ending, all to illustrate the importance of finding a therapist you connect with. Weber's clear and engaging writing provides a pathway through complex concepts. Readers who enjoy pondering emotional intelligence and learning through storytelling will appreciate this book. —*Emily Dziuban*

Your Brain on Art: How the Arts Transform Us.

By Susan Magsamen and Ivy Ross.

Mar. 2023. 304p. Random, $30 (9780593449233). 153.35.

The arts bring joy, improve lives, and heal bodies and minds. In fact, their transformative power is so strong that health-care workers are prescribing museum visits, and researchers are studying the "neuro-arts," note the enthusiastic authors, Magsamen from the International Arts + Mind Lab at the Center for Applied Neuroaesthetics at Johns Hopkins, and Ross, vice president of design for the hardware product area at Google. They convincingly proselytize about the value of the arts and nature, "the most aesthetic of places." Add more natural light and greenery to one's surroundings. A study found that patients who had windows with a view of nature had shorter hospital stays and took fewer pain medications. The arts have always helped people communicate, express feelings and beliefs, innovate, make tools, and solve problems, playing a key role in humanity's vitality. To get the most from the arts, the authors write, be a curious, playful explorer who pays attention to all five senses. And remember, not everyone perceives and responds to the arts in the same way. "One person's cacophony is another person's symphony," write Magsamen and Ross. Hear, hear! —*Karen Springen*

Religion

Living Resistance: An Indigenous Vision for Seeking Wholeness Every Day.

By Kaitlin B. Curtice.

Mar. 2023. 208p. Brazos, $21.99 (9781587435713). 204.

Curtice shares an expansive, generous vision for how to find meaning and make a place for ourselves in an often exhausting and hostile world. The author, a citizen of the Potawatomi Nation, breaks the practice of resistance into four overlapping, mutually sustaining realms: the personal realm of internal reflection and self-care; the communal realm that honors our connections with and responsibilities toward one another; the ancestral realm, which helps us to see both our origins and our futures; and, at the center of them all, the integral realm, bringing together the work of the other three. Though deeply informed by both Christianity and Indigenous spiritual practices, the work Curtice describes is not confined to any one faith (or lack of faith). Rather, it teaches us to hold space for the divine in ourselves, our communities, and our shared history. If we want to change the world, we must have faith in ourselves, close bonds with the people in the fight with us, and a clear understanding of where we have come from and where we wish to go. —*Jenny Hamilton*

Soul Boom: Why We Need a Spiritual Revolution.

By Rainn Wilson.

Apr. 2023. 288p. Hachette Go, $28 (9780306828270); e-book (9780306828294). 200.

Best known as *The Office*'s Dwight, Wilson (*Bassoon King*, 2015), like many of us, used the pandemic to ponder life's myriad problems; unlike many of us, this resulted in his second book. Cofounder of media company SoulPancake and a lifelong Baha'i adherent, Wilson defines spirituality as being concerned with the human spirit or soul as opposed to the material. Everyone, Wilson asserts, is on an individual and collective spiritual journey, yet society is plagued by "pandemics" of mental health issues, materialism, racism, sexism, climate change, and nationalism caused by a dearth of spirituality. Wilson examines the world's religious writings and practices, challenging readers to identify the sacred in their lives, and concludes that the communal aspect of our faith has declined, exacerbating narcissism and disunity. He even advocates for the creation of a new religion—SoulBoom™—combining the best elements of major world faiths and encourages his audience to cultivate these virtues to spark spiritual revolution. Wilson's wry wit and humorous comments punctuate snippets of wisdom from an array of clerics. This is entertaining and thought-provoking. —*Karen Clements*

Social Sciences

After the Miracle: The Political Crusades of Helen Keller.

By Max Wallace.

Apr. 2023. 416p. Grand Central, $30 (9781538707685); e-book (9781538707708). 362.4.

Most people know Helen Keller as the blind, deaf, and nonverbal little girl portrayed in the film *The Miracle Worker* who was taught to communicate through the efforts of her remarkable teacher, Annie Sullivan. But there is much more to the life stories of Keller and Sullivan than the limited, if inspirational narrative of the movie, as Wallace's superb biographical chronicle makes clear. Keller went on to become one of the most famous—

YA Recommendations

Adult titles recommended for teens are marked with the following symbols: **YA,** for books of general YA interest; **YA/C,** for books with particular curricular value; and **YA/S,** for books that will appeal most to teens with a special interest in a specific subject.

and sometimes controversial—progressive activists of the mid-twentieth century. She forged friendships with such towering figures as Mark Twain and a preimprisonment Nelson Mandela. She went up against Jim Crow, Nazism, McCarthyism, apartheid, and a host of other evils. But Wallace's intent is not to lionize Keller and Sullivan, who continued to serve as Keller's companion and translator for years. Both women had flaws beyond the famous myth; Wallace also chronicles those flaws, not to diminish the pair's accomplishments but to paint a more complete picture of the imperfect humanity behind the inspirational narrative. He shows that just because saints have feet of clay, that doesn't make them less saintly. —*Gary Day*

The Courage of Compassion: A Journey from Judgment to Connection.

By Robin Steinberg.

Apr. 2023. 256p. Penguin/Optimism, $29 (9780593084625). 345.

Former public defender and CEO of the Bail Project, Steinberg charts her path to becoming a leader in her field. By using *compassion* in the title, she names the guiding principle for her decades-long career and this book. For Steinberg, compassion began with her troubled father and has remained steadfast throughout her life. When an opportunity arose to start a public defense agency in New York, she put aside fears and concerns to develop an agency that extends beyond legal defense. Her work is not merely to defend individuals in court but also to offer "holistic defense" that addresses the host of consequences and challenges that often follow an arrest, from childcare and housing to immigration. The group's focus on fighting first for human dignity brought them national attention. And when that attention turned negative due to a misstep, she acknowledged it and continued her work. This is an inspiring work of social justice and respect, a story of hard account and meaningful results that debunks commonly held misperceptions. Steinberg challenges other defenders and readers to be courageous, curious, and compassionate. —*Cynthia Dieden*

The Earth Transformed: An Untold History.

By Peter Frankopan.

Apr. 2023. 704p. Knopf, $40 (9780525659167); e-book (9780525659174). 363.738.

Anxious about climate change, Oxford historian Frankopan surveys all of human history, looking for patterns of adaptation and traces of resilience. Since its creation, Earth's climate has proven neither static nor keeping to any essential balance. Humans have existed for as little as 0.0001 percent of the planet's history and interactions with the climate have shaped human existence perhaps more than any other single factor. The ever-expanding science of climate history indicates a two-way dialogue between humans and the climate, humans coping with drought, deluge, and pandemic while also distorting or destroying ecosystems with our actions. Mapping historical, anthropological, and economic narratives against mountains of climate data, Frankopan correlates periods of instability to shifts in weather patterns, ocean currents, and seismic events. And if the human species has frequently survived existential peril—the Black Death, the Little Ice Age, volcanic mega-eruptions—the threats to our collective future are massive and unprecedented. The future favors agile societies that act proactively to mitigate risk. Propelled by Frankopan's global scope and interdisciplinary legwork, the resulting synthesis is ambitious, nervous, and impressive. —*Brendan Driscoll*

The Forgotten Girls: A Memoir of Friendship and Lost Promise in Rural America.

By Monica Potts.

Apr. 2023. 272p. Random, $28 (9780525519911). 305.

From her unique perspective, FiveThirtyEight reporter Potts speculates about causes of the higher mortality rates found in rural southern women as compared to those raised in the rest of the country. Her approach is a longitudinal case study comparing her own story to that of a childhood friend who remained tethered to the declining Arkansas community Potts left. The author credits parental support and self-discipline for her escape from a cycle of despair that traps many women from impoverished areas. Offering intimate details of her own experience, Potts describes how small communities often fail their young people. In describing her friend's situation, she identifies factors contributing to the rampant abuse, addiction, and injustices she witnessed while growing up. Although she cites various studies, Potts relies heavily on personal and anecdotal evidence to support her ideas and provide context. As a journalist, she proposes that her friend's struggles reflect a trend of widespread societal decay. The picture Potts paints is a bleak one, but her memoir serves as a sincere attempt to elicit compassion for those she left behind. —*Joelle Egan*

Generations: The Real Differences Between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, and Silents—And What They Mean for America's Future.

By Jean M. Twenge.

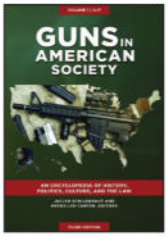
Apr. 2023. 560p. Atria, $32.50 (9781982181611); e-book (9781982181635). 301.

Twenge, a professor of Psychology at San Diego State University, presents a picture of the United States amid the interwoven lives of six generations of people: the Silents, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, Gen Z, and those born after 2012 (generation yet unnamed). She researched 24 long-running government surveys which included 39 million people, with her results offering a unique way to understand history. She dedicates one chapter to each of the generations and highlights an identifying event for each, such as the Great Depression, September 11, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The book also discusses the impact of technology ranging from television and airplanes to birth control and social media. By holistically studying how these events and advancements affected each generation's attitudes and traits, Twenge provides a glimpse into the future, included in her final chapter. The book features lists and charts on detailed data like popular names, birth rates, pop culture, education, social attitudes and more. Readers will enjoy its conversational style, and the book will appeal to a wide audience, notably those interested in intergenerational impacts. —*Jennifer Adams*

Guns in American Society: An Encyclopedia of History, Politics, Culture, and the Law. 3rd ed.

Ed. by Jaclyn Schildkraut and Gregg Lee Carter.

3v. 2022. 1,091p. illus. ABC-CLIO, $319 (9781440867736). 363.330973.



Passing gun-safety legislation in 2022 was a Herculean effort, as Americans are so divided on the issue of gun control. This work, now in its third edition, is a reference for gun-related issues in America, drawing from diverse fields such as politics, cultural studies, law, medicine, history, and economics. Alphabetized entries cover types of weapons (AK-47, plastic guns), people (Franklin Zimring), salient state and federal court cases, organizations and corporations, events (Killeen shooting), and general topics (poverty and gun violence). Entries have been updated and are cross-referenced, and each provides a list of additional sources. As in the second edition, there are appendixes of state and federal laws, judicial developments, and organizations. The total number of entries has been reduced, though there are new entries, such as those on bump stocks and Giffords Law Center. Like the second edition, this work approaches the subject matter from an interdisciplinary perspective, is based on research, and provides multiple perspectives, making it an excellent reference for high-school or college students seeking an introduction to not only ownership and use of firearms but also the wider issues related to gun rights and gun control and general attitudes toward guns in America. —*Muhammed Hassanali*

YA/C: *High-school researchers looking for information on gun issues in America will find this volume useful. MH.*

Homegrown: Timothy McVeigh and the Rise of Right Wing Extremism.

By Jeffrey Toobin.

May 2023. 432p. Simon & Schuster, $29.99 (9781668013571). 320.

The propensity for violence among right-wing extremists in the U.S. did not originate at the Capitol on January 6, 2021. It has roots that reach to April 19, 1995, the grim day when Timothy McVeigh exploded a truck bomb in front of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City and killed 168 people and injured many more. Toobin (*American Heiress*, 2016) delineates the connections between the two events. McVeigh was radicalized by many of the same ideas that radicalize extremists today through different mediums, magazines and talk radio then, social media and podcasts now. Toobin presents a comprehensive biography of McVeigh that covers his troubled childhood, military service, obsession with firearms, and the crime spree undertaken with Terry Nichols that led up to the bombing. Toobin also comprehensively examines the trials of the two men and McVeigh's execution and subsequent "martyrdom." Toobin gathered insider facts from a trove of documents donated by the defense lawyers to weave together this hard-hitting narrative. Given the continued threats of violence and other actions against officials and democracy itself, *Homegrown* is a must-read. —*James Pekoll*

YA: *It's important for teens to learn about how radicalization takes place and its possible consequences. JP.*

The Journey's End: An Investigation of Death and Dying in Modern America.

By Michael Doring Connelly.

Apr. 2023. 288p. Rowman & Littlefield, $34 (9781538175484); e-book (9781538175491). 306.9.

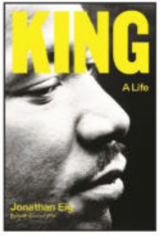
The literature on extending one's life is, not surprisingly, popular and abundant. Here, Connelly argues that, in certain cases, the all-consuming goal of staying alive can actually lead to more pain and fewer well-lived days. Connelly, who worked as the CEO of one of the nation's largest health systems, argues not for individuals to ignore their health concerns but instead to endeavor to make their end-of-life wishes known in advance. *The Journey's End* outlines the ways the labyrinthine American medical system, from the focus on physician specialization to the complicated billing structures, encumbers the care patients receive, often leading to more invasive tests and procedures for negligible results. Connelly also provides ways patients can achieve better autonomy in how care is given as life ends. This is an incisive call to action that readers, no matter the stage of their current medical journey, will come away from more prepared and informed. A perfect complement to Atul Gawande's *Being Mortal* (2014). —*Jeff Connelly*

★ King.

By Jonathan Eig.

May 2023. 688p. illus. Farrar, $35 (9780374279295); e-book (9780374719678). 323.092.

Eig (*Ali*, 2017) has a dream that Americans will remember more about our most famous civil rights icon than one, partially improvised speech. In the most comprehensive MLK biography to date, enhanced with newly released FBI records and unpublished memoirs, Eig digs deep into King's family history, revealing the fortitude and racial trauma experienced by his grandparents and the indomitable church culture which forged his father. MLK Junior and Senior were devoted to each other yet clashed over doctrine and morality and disagreed over the role of the church and of clergy in social justice movements. Eig notes the influence of Morehouse College in strengthening King's sense of Black self-worth and identity and of colleagues (and rivals) like Ralph Abernathy in developing King's own theology of antiracism. Eig insightfully and forthrightly addresses critiques of King as a plagiarist and his relationships with women before and after his marriage to Coretta Scott. Most important, Eig refuses to "defang" King, instead pushing Americans to recognize the radical nature of his demands for justice and his resistance to not only racism but also militarism and capitalism. "Today his words might help us make our way through these troubled times, but only if we actually read them, only if we embrace the complicated King, the flawed King, the human King, the radical King." —*Lesley Williams*

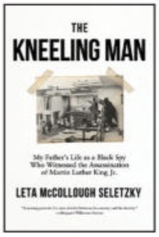


★ The Kneeling Man: My Father's Life as a Black Spy Who Witnessed the Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

By Leta McCollough Seletzky.

Apr. 2023. 304p. Counterpoint, $27 (9781640094727); e-book (9781640094734). 323.

James Louw's photograph of Martin Luther King Jr. lying mortally wounded at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968, includes a young man who is trying to stop King's bleeding. Essayist and memoirist Seletzky reveals that this kneeling man is her father, Marrell "Mac" McCullough, an undercover Memphis police officer who was embedded in the Invaders, an activist group. Seletzky explains how her father came to the Lorraine, how he used army first aid training to try to save King, and what happened afterward. Her powerful, well-organized, and fast-moving narrative reveals the challenges Mac and his family confronted and tracks how everyone's lives turned out. Despite King's assassination, the oppression of sharecropping, relatives who die too young, segregation, and racism, Seletzky recounts some triumphs. Mac helped break the color barrier at the Memphis police department and then at the CIA. Her grandparents instilled in Mac and Seletzky a strong work ethic, the grit to face challenges, and the ability to find succor in gardening. Seletzky's compelling account of the story of the sanitation workers' strike, Reverend King's profound leadership, and efforts to overcome racism in Memphis are richly enlightening and may help illuminate the underlying causes of the January 2023 Memphis police murder of Tyre Nichols. —*John Rowen*


THE
KNEELING MAN
My Father's Life as a Black Spy Who Witnessed the Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.
LETA McCOLLOUGH SELETZKY

YA: *YAs will appreciate this unique perspective on the civil rights era and its ongoing relevance. JR.*

Life Sentence: The Brief and Tragic Career of Baltimore's Deadliest Gang Leader.

By Mark Bowden.

Apr. 2023. 320p. Atlantic Monthly, $27 (9780802162427); e-book (9780802162434). 364.1523.

Baltimore's Sandtown neighborhood suffered many of the same social problems of other distressed areas in the U.S. The situation was made much worse, however, by the gang Trained To Go (TTG) and its young leader, Montana Barronette, as they committed senseless murders and other violence and dealt drugs. Bowden (*The Steal*, 2022) turns his masterful storytelling talent to chronicling the gang's reign of terror and law enforcement's Herculean efforts to end it. This account stresses that most of the people in Sandtown and similar places escaped the "greased path" that leads to prison or an early, violent death. He weaves an intricate narrative of criminal activities, profiles of colorful gang members, and precise descriptions of Sandtown. Bowden combines transcripts of wiretaps, interviews, court reporting, and secondary sources about life in Baltimore and the Black experience in America to yield a powerful chronicle of gang life. *Life Sentence* is not pessimistic, despite the hopelessness at the heart of its story. Instead, it offers many avenues for change and improvement if only the proper political will can be summoned and applied. —*James Pekoll*

Satellite Boy: The International Manhunt for a Master Thief That Launched the Modern Communication Age.

By Andrew Amelinckx.

Mar. 2023. 304p. Counterpoint, $27 (9781640094802); e-book, $14.99 (9781640094819). 364.1523.

There are certain legendary events that define the space race: Sputnik in 1957, the creation of NASA in 1958, the first moon landing in 1969, the disastrous Apollo 13 mission in 1970. Overlooked is Intelsat I, which in 1965 became the first commercial communications satellite ever put into orbit. Without it, there would be no cable TV or cell phones. This invention by audacious engineer Harold Rosen is one of two subjects of *Satellite Boy*, the latest book from true-crime aficionado Amelinckx. The other is dapper supercrook Georges Lemay, who in 1961 pulled off the apotheosis of heists by robbing Montreal's Bank of Nova Scotia. Rosen and Lemay never met, but their stories would intersect when images of Lemay broadcast from Intelsat I, or "Early Bird," led Canadian authorities right to him. As with Erik Larson's *The Devil in the White City*, Amelinckx develops his two narratives suspensefully and in excellent historical detail before braiding them together with the skill of a master weaver. No account of the technocratic 1960s is complete without this thrilling tale. —*Anthony Aycock*

The Wandering Womb: Essays in Search of Home.

By S. L. Wisenberg.

Apr. 2023. 272p. Univ. of Massachusetts, paper, $22.95 (9781625347350). 305.892.

The opening gambit in Wisenberg's Juniper Prize–winning, decades-spanning essay collection, "Female Protection," is concise, funny, and lacerating. Life as a Jewish woman is elucidated throughout this book as so strikingly suggested by its title. But the "wandering womb" is not a clever play on a Jewish trope, rather it's an alleged medical condition discussed in the Kahun Gynaecological Papyrus, circa 1820 BCE, one of countless examples of how women have been misunderstood and maligned. Author of *The Adventures of Cancer Bitch* (2009), Wisenberg continues her frank and provocative inquiries into perceptions of the female body, examining through her own experiences the politics of menstruation, sexuality, attire, cancer, and Judaism's embedded misogyny. Drawing on her journalist's skills and literary prowess, she applies her audacious incisiveness and wit to her family's stories as Jews who fled pogrom-ravaged Russia and settled in Houston and Selma, the latter inspiring fresh insights into the history of anti-Black violence in America and the Holocaust in Europe. Wisenberg also discerns the sublime and the ridiculous in summer camp, sororities, Halloween parties, and adventures in Miami and Chicago. —*Donna Seaman*

Year of No Garbage: Recycling Lies, Plastic Problems, and One Woman's Trashy Journey to Zero Waste.

By Eve O. Schaub.

Apr. 2023. 292p. Skyhorse, paper, $16.99 (9781510774636); e-book (9781510775404). 333.72.

January 2020 saw author Schaub (*Year of No Clutter*, 2017) embark on a new, daunting journey—she vowed not to generate any garbage for an entire year. Living completely garbage free sounds like a pipe dream, the realities of which Schaub tackles head-on over the course of the year. The pandemic complicates things, with more packaging, online shipments, and necessary medical waste to handle. Part exploration of consumerism, part science side of garbage, and part memoir, this is an excellent look at one family's journey toward going zero garbage. Everything from the chemistry of various "recyclable" plastics to where your recycling actually goes is explored. Tips and tricks on living garbage free are laid out alongside very honest admissions of personal pitfalls, surprises learned, and perhaps most importantly of all, the ways society is built around disposability, and just how difficult it is to go zero garbage when everything around you is built to be used once and then thrown away. Perfect for readers of memoir and science as well as those interested in the cross section of consumerism and going green. —*Kathleen Townsend*

Science

The Book of Animal Secrets: Nature's Lessons for a Long and Happy Life.

By David B. Agus.

Mar. 2023. 400p. illus. Simon & Schuster, $29.99 (9781982103026); e-book (9781982103071). 508.

When faced with a devastating virus, American brown bats that had slept together in clumps for millennia adapted into solitary sleepers in fewer than 20 years. Adult jellyfish, when threatened, can reverse the aging process and become carefree teenagers again. Elephants really don't ever forget, and they have cancer-proof blood. Various species manifest all kinds of unique qualities, as practicing cancer doctor and prolific author Agus (*A Short Guide to a Long Life*, 2014) relates in a series of detailed, engaging essays about what animals can teach us humans about becoming healthier and happier. Agus has a knack for presenting technical information and scientific research in accessible language, weaving in lots of anecdotes, interesting tidbits, observations, and stories gleaned from an array of subject specialists. The author and his team usually raise more questions than they can answer and always emphasize the need for more research, whether considering the exotic white rhinoceros or a common pigeon. Readers will find a great deal of applicable, practical advice for healthier living and should develop renewed respect for the complexity of earth's creatures. —*Kathleen McBroom*

YA: *Animal lovers, aspiring physicians, and researchers, especially, will appreciate the info here and the supporting photos, charts, graphs, and endnotes. KM.*

Mushrooming: An Illustrated Guide to the Fantastic, Delicious, Deadly, and Strange World of Fungi.

By Diane Borsato. Illus. by Kelsey Oseid.

Mar. 2023. 240p. illus. The Experiment, $24.95 (9781615199587); e-book (9781615199594). 579.6.

This curious compendium of all things fungi will be welcomed by amateur mycologists, avant-garde artists, intrepid woods trampers, cautious cooks, and even armchair readers. Covering over 120 fungi species found in forests, woodlands, grocery stores, and dank basements, it includes edibles, hallucinogens, medicines, and aphrodisiacs. Each entry provides richly colorful illustrations accompanied by identifying features, field notes, and serious advice on whether consumption will bring hallucinogenic adventure, gustatory glee, or agonizing death. The fungi names alone will grab your attention: hedgehog mushroom, dog vomit slime mold, lobster mushroom, plums and custard. Sprinkled throughout are whimsical accounts of fungi-enthusiast adventures, like fungi hunting in Chinatown, chatting on a park bench with one's favorite SCOBY (symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast) "mother," and the infinity burial suit, "a stylish black outfit that covers the body from head to toe, embroidered with spore-infused yarn in a dendritic pattern." This guide merits an enthusiastic recommendation for both public and academic libraries. The illustrations alone, saturated with eye-pleasing, earthy colors, are worth the price. —*Art Lichtenstein*

Sit in the Sun and Other Lessons in the Spiritual Wisdom of Cats.

By Jon M. Sweeney.

Apr. 2023. 216p. Broadleaf, $24.99 (9781506482279). 636.8.

Spirituality author Sweeney (*The Pope's Cat*, 2018, among many, many others) here pounces on the endearing (or less so) habits of our cat companions, providing segues into comparable activities for humans, and every other paragraph seems to have a quote worth saving: "Be foolish, just a bit" (from the "Play Joyfully" chapter). Look into the "spiritual practice of saying no" (from "Refuse to Be Tamed"). And, as attributed to St. Teresa of Ávila: "There's a time for partridge and a time for penance." Felines who routinely ask vociferously for food also know the practice of fasting, perhaps from sundown to sunup, an observation that brings forward Sweeney's gentle recommendation to ourselves to try abstaining from food for some period of time, then reveling in the joy of the feast (by, for instance, watching *Babette's Feast*). Every chapter features ruminations on cat-dom, bolstered by comments from religious leaders of all denominations and translated into thoughts that could enrich lives. Simply written, with complexities to ponder. Includes sources for further reading. —*Barbara Jacobs*

Under Alien Skies: A Sightseer's Guide to the Universe.

By Philip Plait.

Apr. 2023. 320p. Norton, $30 (9780393867305). 520.3.

What would it be like to stand on Mars or experience sunset on a world with multiple suns? To visit a stellar nursery or orbit a black hole? What would you see? How would it feel? Plait takes readers on a tour of the cosmos, from the moon to the supermassive black hole at the center of our galaxy, and paints vivid descriptions of what these objects are like, using the best observations and theories we currently have. It's an effective framing device to explore what we know about the strange and wonderful things we've discovered, from exoplanets to nebulae. His realistic depictions, grounded in human senses, awaken a feeling of wanderlust and make the esoteric feel real. What elevates this above similar books about our universe is Plait's sense of wonder and joy. He clearly never lost his childhood glee for discovery, and it's refreshing for a scientist to be so open about it. He shows that science requires creativity and imagination and rewards curiosity and the urge to explore. It's a remarkable journey. —*John Keogh*

Child Care

Advanced Parenting: Advice for Helping Kids through Diagnoses, Differences, and Mental Health Challenges.

By Kelly Fradin.

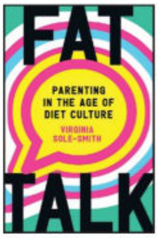
Apr. 2023. 336p. Grand Central/Balance, $29 (9781538722466); e-book (9781538722480). 649.

Nearly one-third of children in the U.S. are living with a chronic medical condition, writes Fradin, and while there is a wealth of parenting information out there, most of it is written for parents with typical children facing common childhood problems. Drawing on her years of experience as a complex-care pediatrician, Fradin provides an outstanding guide for parents seeking more advanced help: the skills and strategies to support children with more serious, complicated health challenges. Her advice, notably compassionate and inclusive, encompasses just about any concern a family might face, from researching their situation to building an effective care plan that considers a child's developmental stage and the reality of family resources. Those looking for more information will find extensive notes and lists of readings and pertinent national organizations. Parents who are often stressed, overwhelmed, and even stigmatized by their child's health challenges will welcome this authoritative, commonsense resource. A must-have for parenting collections. *—Jane Harper*

Fat Talk: Parenting in the Age of Diet Culture.

By Virginia Sole-Smith.

Apr. 2023. 384p. Holt, $29.99 (9781250831217). 649.1.

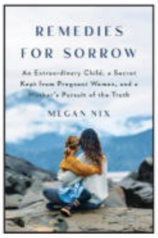


This paradigm-shifting book gathers journalist Sole-Smith's (*The Eating Instinct*, 2018) findings from countless studies, journals, and her own career-spanning interviews to flip the script on diet culture and anti-fat bias, the very "air we breathe" that convinces us all that our bodies are our value—and that most of our bodies need fixing. With many data points and personal anecdotes, this is more an information survey than a parenting road map, covering topics ranging from myths about fatness to how diet culture manifests within our own family units and the influences of youth sports and social media on kids' perception of their bodies. A wrap-up section helpfully synthesizes Sole-Smith's findings for easy consultation, along with scripts for talking about diet culture, fatness, and bias with kids, doctors, and even ourselves. Further reading and source lists and an index are also of note. If it can feel radical to accept and overwhelming to implement change in one's own views and parenting style, Sole-Smith's guide comes with the promise that over time it will be less so; starting the conversation is what matters. With its message of trusting our kids' bodies (and everyone else's) as they are as both a social justice issue and an act of love, this is a great place to begin. *—Annie Bostrom*

Remedies for Sorrow: An Extraordinary Child, a Secret Kept from Pregnant Women, and a Mother's Pursuit of the Truth.

By Megan Nix.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Doubleday, $28 (9780385548595); e-book (9780385548601). 618.


REMEDIES FOR SORROW
An Extraordinary Child, a Secret Kept from Pregnant Women, and a Mother's Pursuit of the Truth
MEGAN NIX

When Nix had her second child, she felt something was off. She was correct: as a fetus, her daughter, Anna, had been exposed to CMV, a condition that can result in deafness, blindness, delayed development, physical and neurological complications, and even premature death. Nix learned that CMV is a common virus that stays in people's systems forever. Spread by direct contact with an infected person's body fluids, the virus is most commonly carried and transmitted by toddlers. Nix couldn't believe she had never heard any of this, and was outraged to learn that most medical practitioners rarely bring it up to their pregnant patients. In this engaging and informative account, Nix shares her family's experiences: spending three months of every year in Alaska as her husband fishes for salmon, balancing Anna's needs with those of other family members. She also recounts the initial, crippling isolation she felt, the eventual joy of connecting with other moms of CMV-exposed kids, and her increasing CMV-awareness activism. Nix is honest and forthcoming, an engaging writer with a gift for description. CMV is just beginning to get the attention it deserves from the medical world, and this timely and insightful account will help raise awareness. *—Kathleen McBroom*

Health & Medicine

I Can't Save You.

By Anthony Chin-Quee.

Apr. 2023. 368p. Riverhead, $27 (9780593418888); e-book (9780593418901). 610.92.

In his frank memoir, Chin-Quee, an otolaryngologist (ear, nose, and throat surgeon) with an undergraduate degree from Harvard ("the fucking epitome of my immigrant elders' American dream") and a medical degree from Emory, shares his bumpy journey. His father gambled, accumulated debts, and watched horse racing on TV instead of paying attention to his kids. A Black man with Jamaican roots, Chin-Quee grapples with racism, depression, and self-harm (he's a cutter). He could have written about his stints as a medical consultant for *Grey's Anatomy*, a staff writer for *The Resident*, or an award-winning storyteller with *The Moth*. Instead, he mainly recounts stories from his medical training years, including detours into his boozy dating life. Haunted by his father, he recounts the bad dreams he has about him. This is a demanding read, and Chin-Quee gives fair warning at the beginning when he writes, "Hold on to your butts. It's a wild ride." His story will resonate, particularly with readers who feel as though they don't quite fit in and those dealing with a family history of mental illness. *—Karen Springen*

Little Earthquakes.

By Sarah Mandel.

Apr. 2023. 256p. Harper, $30 (9780063270916); e-book (9780063270947). 610.

LITTLE EARTHQUAKES
A MEMOIR
SARAH MANDEL

Clinical psychologist Mandel recounts learning, during the third trimester of her second pregnancy, that she had stage IV breast cancer. It was a shock. She had thought the little lump was just a clogged milk duct. Miraculously, after treatment, she seemed to be OK. Sure, she lost her long, blonde tresses. And yes, she experienced chemo-induced menopause. But it seemed possible that she and her husband, Derek, might get to live happily ever after with their newborn, Siena, and their four-year-old, Sophie. In the epilogue of her uplifting recovery story, she reveals that she is struggling now with tumors in her brain. Still, she remains remarkably upbeat, perhaps because she is a therapist who helps trauma survivors heal and recover. She also openly shares her feelings of insecurity, admitting, for example, to being upset one day when she sees some beautiful young women with long hair. She and her husband understandably struggle, but they stand by each other, and through mutual dedication and hard work in couples therapy, they relearn how to love each other. Couples dealing with cancer, or any other major setback, will find comfort in Mandel's beautifully written, moving memoir. *—Karen Springen*

Psychonauts: Drugs and the Making of the Modern Mind.

By Mike Jay.

Apr. 2023. 320p. Yale, $32.50 (9780300257946). 615.

Cultural historian Jay reviews the fascinating saga of psychedelic drugs and stimulants. Psychonauts are individuals with a penchant for exploring their own minds and altered states of consciousness, assisted by psychoactive substances. Jay concentrates on the late 1800s, but his discussion stretches well into the twentieth century, when these drugs were mostly viewed as dangerous and eventually criminalized. The psychonauts and their preferred substances Jay spotlights include Sigmund Freud (cocaine), Guy de Maupassant (ether), Aldous Huxley (mescaline), Baudelaire (hashish), philosopher William James (nitrous oxide, also known as laughing gas), neurologist Silas Weir Mitchell (peyote), Thomas De Quincey (opium), and surgeon William Halsted (cocaine). Self-experimenting scientists and physicians functioned as both test subjects and clinical observers of drug effects. Many users of these mind-bending substances vividly described and extolled the drugs' ability to generate altered perception and transcendence. The medical use of psychedelic drugs is garnering increased attention, MDMA (Ecstacy) for severe PTSD, psilocybin (magic mushrooms) for depression and end-of-life care, and ketamine for treatment-resistant depression. The story of psychedelic chemicals is complex and riveting. Readers should anticipate quite a trip. —*Tony Miksanek*

Cookery

I'll Bring the Cake: Recipes for Every Season and Every Occasion.

By Mandy Merriman.

Apr. 2023. 352p. illus. Harvest, $40 (9780358697244); e-book (9780063305038). 641.8.

Cake baker and decorator Merriman is a whiz with construction and décor, but the secret to her cake making might surprise some: a box of store-bought cake mix. Add buttermilk, sour cream, eggs, and vegetable oil in varying quantities, mix, and pour the batter into three six-inch round cake pans. Bake, cool, and freeze the layers, then stack and top with buttercream frosting, and voilà, you'll have mastered the basic formula for these bakes. Ideas for every celebration abound—a lemon almond cake with sunbursts and roses of frosting can brighten a springtime soirée or bridal shower, while a poached pear caramel cake might be the centerpiece for a fall wedding or an intimate winter gathering. Those who want to blend technique with artistry will appreciate guava cake, with its alluring, ombréed ruffles that make the frosting look like a ballerina's tutu. More lighthearted bakes include the monster cookie or Hostess cupcake cake, but do not be fooled: patience and precision will be required for making sure any of these cakes come out picture perfect. —*Jessica S. Levy*

The Arts

Biography of a Phantom: A Robert Johnson Blues Odyssey.

By Robert Mack McCormick. Ed. by John W. Troutman.

Apr. 2023. 264p. Smithsonian, $29.95 (9781588347343). 782.4216.

A lot of legwork went into McCormick's account of his dogged search for the famed blues musician Robert Johnson, a meandering trek that took him all over the Mississippi Delta to places like Friars Point, Clarksdale, Helena, Martinsville, Commerce, Tunica, and Hazelhurst. Knocking on strangers' doors, striking up conversations in pool halls and diners, on plantations and street corners, McCormick, an obsessive white folklorist, found folks who were willing to speak with him and succeeded in uncovering numerous facts about Johnson, whose life story had been overshadowed by fabulous tales and dark myths. McCormick's manuscript languished for 50 years, as recounted by editor Troutman. Suffering from mental illness, McCormick battled his demons, wrote and rewrote his life's work, fought and harassed others for credit and control of the Johnson legacy, and in the process alienated and victimized Johnson's legal heirs. Still, this volume is a significant contribution to scholarship on Black culture and the blues, told by a flawed man whose perseverance, patience, diligence, and methodical methods provide valuable insights into Robert Johnson and the milieu from which his music sprang. —*Ben Segedin*

Don't Tell Anybody the Secrets I Told You.

By Lucinda Williams.

Apr. 2023. 272p. Crown, $28.99 (9780593136492). 782.4216.

While her fans would expect nothing less, songwriter-musician Williams' memoir is remarkable for its true insight into the author as a person and as an artist. Love affairs and failed flirtations, bad hangovers and bad press, day jobs and speechless-moment meetings with idols like Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen—it's all fair game. (Readers will want to find out for themselves which fellow musician didn't take kindly to being bitten during a make out session.) Starting in Williams' peripatetic childhood spent moving around the South for her poet father's pursuit of teaching jobs and on through her early love of music and the career it bore over decades, the book also shines light on the facts of being a woman in music and a woman in her amorphous blues, folk, "alt-country," non-category specificity. Woven into Williams' story, which moves mostly chronologically and discusses family trauma and mental health with openness, are the nitty-gritty of album-making and the lyrics to many of her songs, with the stories behind them. —*Annie Bostrom*

HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Reading like it was written on a series of cocktail napkins in the absolutely best way, this ever-quotable memoir of a born songsmith has something to offer nearly any grownup who has listened to music for the last half-century.

Crafts & Hobbies

Embroidered Crochet: Enchanting Projects to Crochet and Embroider.

By Anna Nikipirowicz.

Mar. 2023. 96p. illus. Search, paper, $19.95 (9781782219712); e-book (9781781269633). 746.43.

Which came first: the crochet or the embroidery? In this case, embroidery trumps its companion, since every one of the 10 projects is defined by the stitches on its top. Prolific blogger and author Nikipirowicz (*Crocheted Wreaths for the Home*, 2020) has created nature-inspired home and hearth objects that fit into any décor, from a wildflower wall hanging and mushroom bunting to vegetable coasters and a birds and trees blanket. While the background for each pattern is a beginner's joy of single crochet all the way (double crochet to those in the UK), the stitching on top takes fanciful needlework to portray—fairly realistically—items like roses and mushrooms. Straightforward directions include excellent color photographs, and it's an unusual treat that Nikipirowicz includes both the yarns she used and generic options, which will be important for U.S. stitchers who can't access brands only available abroad. Upfront sections on blocking projects, 11 embroidery stitches, and finishing are comprehensive and easy to follow. The only missing ingredient? Design templates are a bit tiny and not easy to duplicate. —*Barbara Jacobs*

Tiny Felt Cuties & Creatures.

By Delilah Iris.

Mar. 2023. 128p. illus. Quarto/Walter Foster, paper, $21.99 (9780760380529). 745.5924.

Our collective fascination with tiny crafts shows no signs of stopping. Maine-based crafter Iris offers her first how-to on the making of mini-miniatures from felt, focused on recognizable creatures and their accompaniments: dolls and dollhouse, dog and its pet bed, frog and toadstool. Each of the dozen or so patterns is rich in step-by-steps that are both narrated and photographed. An upfront section zeroes in on hand sewing, from how to thread a needle to how to do embroidery stitches like French knots and daisies. Designs do not include a list of suggested materials (Iris mentions the use of felt scraps) nor an indication of difficulty level, despite the broad range of abilities of hand sewers, so this could be a hindrance. Nine pages of minimum-size pattern templates are ready to use and/or enlarge. —*Barbara Jacobs*

Sports & Recreation

The Ball in the Air: A Golfing Adventure.

By Michael Bamberger.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Simon & Schuster/Avid Reader, $30 (9781668009826); e-book (9781668009840). 796.352.

Bamberger, a senior writer at the Fire Pit Collective, has been one of our finest golf journalists for the past 30 years. Here he turns away from professional golfers (*The Second Life of Tiger Woods,* 2020) to examine the game as played by dedicated amateurs, himself included. His subjects range from Pratima Sherpa, who grew up living in a maintenance shed near a golf course in Kathmandu, where her father was the greenskeeper; to Sam Reeves, from rural Georgia, who went on to become a multimillionaire with a home at Pebble Beach, one of the most exclusive golf communities in the U.S.; to Ryan French, a

Continued on p.29

Booklist

Spring Travel Guides, 2023

by Annie Bostrom

Art from *Dordogne, Bordeaux and the Southwest Coast.*

Twice a year, we gaze out at the landscape of travel publishing and report back. This time around, we're pleased to see lots of updates of perennially popular guides, as well as new titles to mesmerize globe-trotters and armchair travelers alike.

Always Ireland: An Insider's Tour of the Emerald Isle. By Jack Kavanagh. National Geographic, $35 (9781426222160).

Professional Irish tour guide Kavanagh takes readers through Ireland's popular spots and lesser-known gems, county by county.

Big Sky, Big Parks: An Exploration of Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, and All That Montana in Between. By Ednor Therriault. Globe Pequot, $24.95 (9781493064755).

Therriault, a Montana native and expert, explores the two national parks and the space—a full day's drive—between them.

The Bikepacker's Guide to the World. Lonely Planet, $35 (9781838695019).

Traveling with only a bike and a backpack is as sustainable as it gets; here are 75 potential such trips, some on every continent.

Beachcombing. Chronicle, $12.95 (9781797217925).
Sunset Seeking. Chronicle, $12.95 (9781797218557).

From Chronicle's growing Pocket Nature series, these books guide readers in finding mindfulness in the mundane.

Epic Snow Adventures of the World. Lonely Planet, $35 (9781838696030).

Ice-caving, anyone? This is your book, featuring 50 stories and ideas for more than 150 snow-centric journeys.

Eyewitness (DK)

- **Austria.** $24.99 (9780241612927).
- **Berlin.** $24.99 (9780241612712).
- **Boston.** $19.99 (9780241473955).
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- **Dordogne, Bordeaux and the Southwest Coast.** $24.99 (9780241615133).
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- **Europe by Train.** $24.99 (9780241616024).
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- **Germany.** $27.99 (9780241612804).
- **Greek Islands.** $24.99 (9780241617595).
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- **Sardinia.** $21.99 (9780241612910).
- **Slovenia.** $24.99 (9780241615317).
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Like a Local

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- **Vienna.** $14.99 (9788854419667).

Falcon Guides (Globe Pequot)

- **Best Hikes Bend.** $24.99 (9781493069675).
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- **Paddling Colorado.** $19.95 (9781493069347).
- **Paddling New York City.** $19.95 (9781493058341).
- **Rock Climbing Oregon's Smith Rock State Park.** $50 (9781493030187).

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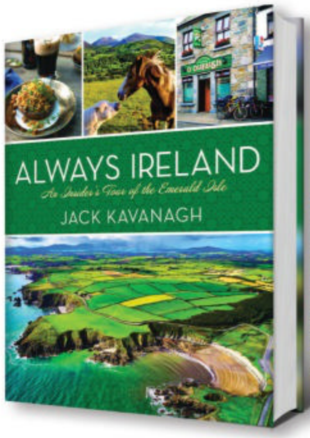
SO LITTLE TIME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JACK KAVANAGH

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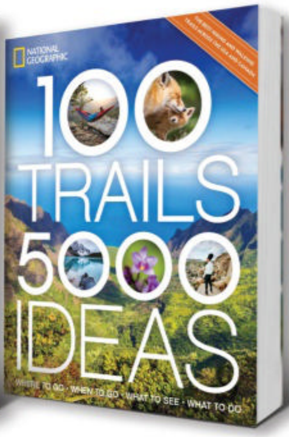
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From Minnesota to Mile Zero on the Mississippi: Threading a Kayak through the River's Cultures and Characters. By Dennis Van Norman. Globe Pequot, $27.95 (9781493073559).

Part memoirist, part guide, Van Norman welcomes readers on his quest to solo kayak all 2,500-plus miles of the storied river over 13 years.

Gourmet Trails of Europe. Lonely Planet, $22 (9781838699918).

Itineraries for 40 food-and-drink tours of European cities make for armchair traveling and dining at its most indulgent.

Great Outdoors U.S.A.: 1,000 Adventures across All 50 States. National Geographic, $35 (9781426222665).

From walking to ziplining, readers will find ways to get active outside.

Lodge: An Indoorsy Tour of America's National Parks. By Max Humphrey and Kathryn O'Shea-Evans. Gibbs Smith, $40 (9781423661344).

Some of us prefer armchair traveling even while we're away from home. Enter this gorgeous guide to U.S. national park lodges.

Lonely Planet Guides (Hachette)
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- **Vietnam.** $28.99 (9781788688963).

On Island Time: Illustrated Adventures on and around the Islands of British Columbia. By Chandler O'Leary. Sasquatch, $24.95 (9781632173386).

Author-illustrator O'Leary's "alternative atlas" invites readers to slow down with her favorite spots and eats in the Pacific Northwest islands.

The Passenger: Barcelona. Europa, $22 (9781787704374).

This issue of the "book-magazine" series combines journalism, personal essays, and traditional travel writing about Barcelona.

Run: Races and Trails around the World. DK. $35 (9780744079340).

From the Boston Marathon to China's Great Wall, 100 routes will delight running enthusiasts and race watchers alike.

A Therapeutic Atlas: Destinations to Inspire and Enchant. The School of Life, $32.99 (9781912891931).

This illustrated guide ponders the power of place and the healing possibilities of travel in worldwide spots both indoors and out.

Continued from p.25

fast-food executive who reinvented himself as a golf writer covering the “Dreamer” beat, especially the rough-and-tumble Dakotas Tour. Linking these stories and the snippets of Bamberger’s life on the links is the abiding love all these golfers feel for a game that “promises you nothing and loads you up with problems.” Like the author’s first golf memoir, *To the Linksland*, this is for everyone who knows “what it’s like to marvel at a white ball in a high sky.” —*Bill Ott*

Choosing to Run.

By Des Linden.

Apr. 2023. 272p. Dutton, $29 (9780593186640); e-book (9780593186657). 796.42.

The Boston Marathon is famous for dueling finishes that produce defining moments. For Linden (then Davila), her moment seemed to be sealed during the 2011 Boston Marathon, when she dueled Caroline Kilel down the final straightaway in electrifying back-and-forth fashion, only to finish as the runner-up by two seconds. Linden, however, was determined not to let one race define her career. This gripping memoir, written with noted sports journalist Ford, chronicles Linden’s journey to a new defining moment. The account traces her life from her early years in San Diego to earning All-American honors at Arizona State, and becoming a two-time Olympian. The revised edition of her career moment, however, needed to wait until the 2018 Boston Marathon—contested during a rain-soaked Nor’easter—when Linden became the first American woman to claim the title since 1985. Linden’s strong convictions and high standards, especially regarding clean sport, are admirable, but she is also a well-balanced athlete—a voracious reader as well as a connoisseur of good coffee and fine bourbon. An inspiring memoir about navigating life choices both in youth and as an elite athlete. —*Brenda Barrera*

YA/S: *Great reading for teen runners with valuable lessons about putting in hard work and staying true to your values. BB.*

Literature

Bruno Schulz: An Artist, a Murder, and the Hijacking of History.

By Benjamin Balint.

Apr. 2023. 288p. illus. Norton, $30 (9780393866575). 891.85.

“Bruno Schulz was as anxious in life as he was undaunted in art,” writes Balint as he delves into the mysteries of this not widely enough known Jewish Polish “master of twentieth-century imaginative fiction” and creator of visual art as refined in execution as it was shocking in its depiction of male subjugation to female power. Schulz was also a “self-effacing” schoolteacher, a romantic whose worshipful relationships with women didn’t conform to social standards, and a self-described “citizen of the Republic of Dreams.” Schulz’s life, work, and complicated legacy, including fraught battles over the fate, meaning, and ownership of his censored work, parallel those of Kafka, the subject of Balint’s previous book, *Kafka’s Last Trial* (2018). When the Nazis occupied Schulz’s hometown, Drohobych, one particularly sadistic officer forced Schulz to make propagandistic art and art for residences seized by the Germans until another Nazi shot the artist dead in the street. When a mural of Schulz’s was found in a pantry in 2001 by German documentary filmmakers, a geopolitically complicated tug of war ensued among various governments and Israel’s Yad Vashem. Balint vividly, insightfully, and affectingly casts light on long-shadowed Schulz and his startlingly original work, composing a freshly enlightening, harrowing, and invaluable chapter in the perpetual history of genocide and the courage and transcendence of artists. —*Donna Seaman*

This Isn’t Going to End Well: The True Story of a Man I Thought I Knew.

By Daniel Wallace.

Apr. 2023. 272p. Algonquin, $28 (9781643752105). 813.

In this poignant memoir, the author of *Big Fish* (2012) recounts his friendship with his brother-in-law, cartoonist William Nealy. Wallace met Nealy when he was 12, and Nealy, age 18, was poised to jump off a roof into the family pool. Nealy’s risky outdoor adventures and expert, cartoon-infused manuals and maps made him a hero in the subculture of extreme sports, “the R. Crumb of whitewater.” To family and friends, Nealy was a stalwart and a fixer; to young Wallace, he was a “rock star.” But living a self-imposed platonic ideal of manhood proved unsustainable. At 48, the fearless, caring man Wallace admired, who even inspired Wallace to write, died by suicide. A cache of journals found after Nealy’s death revealed “a broken self” hidden within the heroic identity that a lonely, nerdy child had created on the “building blocks” of cartooning and scouting. Wallace’s storytelling skill captures the vibrant personality Nealy showed the world, and his emotional candor delineates the tragedy of a good man “who was toxic only to himself.” —*Anne Foley*

YA: *Nealy’s cartooning and adventurous life will interest teens, who will appreciate Wallace’s open and thoughtful exploration of identity, friendship, and suicide. AF.*

Poetry

Calligraphies.

By Marilyn Hacker.

Apr. 2023. 144p. Norton, $26.95 (9781324036463). 811.

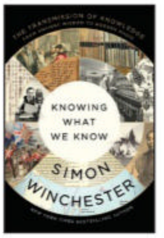
Poetic form is Hacker’s defense against chaos. Armed with the rigor of the ghazal and the pantoum, she channels the sorrows of war and terror, displacement and exile. Mixing the personal with the global, Hacker is especially adept here in her incantatory use of repetition. A New Yorker who has long lived in Paris and a poet with nearly 20 collections and many major awards, Hacker is also an accomplished translator, whirling here among French, Arabic, and English linguistically and culturally, taking particular pleasure in the culinary. She is funny and scathing in her observations about age and the wretched “administrative limbo” that traps refugees, political exiles, and immigrants and offers gorgeous homages to poet Marie Ponsot and Syrian actress and activist Fadwa Suleiman. Hacker joined forces with poet Karthika Naïr in *A Different Distance* (2021) to share experiences of the COVID-19 lockdown. The pandemic and its cascading implications also shape this volume’s lush series, “Montpeyroux Sonnets,” in which she contrasts life’s abundance in the French countryside with paltry interactions among masked humans. Hacker is adept, witty, poignant, profound, and mesmerizing. —*Donna Seaman*

History

Knowing What We Know: The Transmission of Knowledge: From Ancient Wisdom to Modern Magic.

By Simon Winchester.

Apr. 2023. 464p. Harper, $35 (9780063142886). 900.



Winchester’s oeuvre is a testament to his abiding interest in history, human innovation, and his distinctive ability to share his insatiable curiosity with enthusiastic readers. He has written engagingly about etymology, engineering, explorers, and inventors as well as maps, oceans, rivers, land, earthquakes, and volcanoes. Such polymathic inquisitiveness makes Winchester the ideal guide to explore the history of knowledge and its transmission through the centuries. Winchester’s sheer joy in imparting what he learns is evident on every page, reminding the reader that *knowledge* was once predominantly employed as a verb. Winchester’s ebullient style and countless irresistible anecdotes and strange facts inspire the reader to knowledge for themselves. We explore the origin, nature, and types of curiosity, track the founding of the earliest libraries and the destruction of these temples of knowledge by disasters natural and manmade. We trace the evolution of paper and are reminded that the Latin word for a tree’s inner bark is *liber.* We follow information dissemination from Gutenberg to newspapers to Google to propaganda and fake news. Finally, in this technology-saturated world, we must ponder Winchester’s existential query, “If our brains no longer have need of knowledge, and if we have no need because the computers do it all for us, then what is human intelligence good for?” Essential reading. —*Bill Kelly*

Adult Fiction

General Fiction

Advika and the Hollywood Wives.

By Kirthana Ramisetti.

Apr. 2023. 384p. Grand Central, $29 (9781538709276); e-book (9781538709290).

Lonely Advika Srinivasan, still reeling from the accidental death of her twin sister, Anu, is working as a bartender when she meets handsome, much-older movie producer Julian Zelding. After a short, whirlwind romance, they get married. At first it seems perfect. Julian buys her a new computer so she can work on her screenplay, and she has nothing but time to write. Julian's only request is that she not look into the demise of his previous three marriages. But with Anu's voice in her head and a mysterious bequest from his late first wife, Advika can't help herself, and soon she is clandestinely checking books out of the library and meeting with failed music producers. As Julian showers her with gifts, she can't help but feel like she's going to meet the same fate as the previous Mrs. Zeldings, ambitions quashed, living only to serve Julian. Ramisetti's latest, following *Dava Shastri's Last Day* (2021), is a compelling portrait of a young woman fighting erasure, learning to accept help from her friends, and coming into her own. —*Susan Maguire*

The All-American.

By Joe Milan Jr.

Apr. 2023. 304p. Norton, $28.95 (9781324035657).

Uncle Rick was supposed to be in the hospital after a failed suicide attempt when Bucky and brother Bobby are sent by mom Sheryl to deliver burnt brownies. Instead, Unc is busy robbing a car dealership, but it's Bucky who gets stuck with life-altering consequences. Turns out Bucky's immigration paperwork was never finalized when Bucky's Korean biofather abandoned Sheryl. Instead of finishing senior year and playing football, Bucky's being deported to Seoul with a name he can't even pronounce. Somehow, he's gotta get back home, but not before he's conscripted by the South Korean military (every Korean male citizen—because Yi Byeonghak is that—must serve two years) and shipped to a remote island to trap thieving monsters. Second-generation Korean American Milan Jr.'s debut novel is poised to induce whiplash for all its corkscrew agility. Amid the uncomfortable laughter, Milan confronts transracial identity, societal roles chosen and forced, limits of language, "good" and "bad" mutability, and the porousness of truth and lies. Pair with Alice Stephens' *Famous Adopted People* (2018) for additional (disturbing) gratification. —*Terry Hong*

Cloud Girls.

By Lisa Harding.

Apr. 2023. 400p. HarperVia, $30 (9780063270282); e-book (9780063270305).

This heart-wrenching novel follows two girls' journeys into sex trafficking. At 13, Nico is at the top of her class in her village in Moldova. She loves climbing trees and swimming with her best friend. When she gets her first period, her father tells her it's time for her to get married and sells her to a man who, he assures her, will let her continue her education in England. As soon as she gets in the man's car, though, it's clear that the better life her father promised her was a lie. Meanwhile, the adult figures in fifteen-year-old Sammy's life don't believe her about her alcoholic mother's abuse. She can no longer stand any of it and runs away from her Dublin home. After a predatory older boyfriend grooms her for sex work, she tries to make money on her own. Inspired by firsthand accounts Irish novelist Harding (*Bright Burning Things*, 2021) encountered through her work with the Stop Sex Trafficking of Children and Young People campaign, this is a haunting look at exploitation. —*Laura Chanoux*

YA: *Older teens who can handle difficult subject matter may appreciate Harding's commitment to each girl's voice. LC.*

The Daydreams.

By Laura Hankin.

May 2023. 368p. Berkley, $27 (9780593438183); e-book (9780593438206).

The Daydreams captivated teens and tweens during the early 2000s, until the show's live finale went horribly awry, turning its promising young star, Summer, into a punchline. Thirteen years later, Noah is an actor and screenwriter, Liana is an influencer, Kat is an attorney, and Summer has been in and out of rehab. Nostalgic fans are clamoring for a reunion, and the quartet obliges, each with his or her own hope for redemption or revenge. The truth of what happened during the live show is far more complex than any of the daydreams could have guessed, and each has a unique perspective on the incident that ended the meteoric rise. Hankin (*A Special Place for Women*, 2021) unspools the story of the reunion alongside the story of the show's original run, exploring how the early-aughts teen-celebrity machine imposed unrealistic standards on its young female stars then punished them when they stepped out of line. Full of dishy drama that reads like a behind-the-scenes look at any number of Disney/Nickelodeon shows of the era, Hankin's latest will appeal to fans of Elissa R. Sloan and Ella Berman. —*Nanette Donohue*

YA: *Young-adulthood looms large in this biting tale of former child stars. JS.*

The Forgetting.

By Hannah Beckerman.

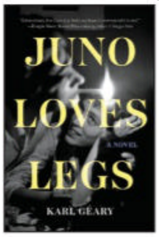
Apr. 2023. 388p. Amazon/Lake Union, paper, $16.99 (9781542030380); e-book (9781542030397).

Anna awakens in a London hospital room, unable to remember how she arrived there, anything about her past, and most strangely, who the man is claiming to be her husband. Meanwhile, in Bristol, Livvy is adjusting to her role as a new mom and wife to Dominic when Dominic's estranged mother arrives, making claims about his past and demanding to see their baby. Both women must navigate unfamiliar territories with mixed messages from those closest to them, unsure whom to trust. Somehow Anna and Livvy are connected, but how their stories will meet and where they will end remains unclear until the finale. Told in alternating chapters from each woman's perspective, *The Forgetting* is an exploration into the experience of being gaslit by those who claim to love you the most and demonstrates how easily one can be coerced into a pattern of control. This slow-burn suspense novel is well written, with strong character development, and is a good read-alike for books by Lucy Foley and writing duo Greer Hendricks and Sarah Pekkanen. —*Margaret Howard*

★ Juno Loves Legs.

By Karl Geary.

Apr. 2023. 304p. Catapult, $27 (9781646221134); e-book (9781646221141).



Childhood friends face poverty and adversity in Geary's (*Montpelier Parade*, 2017) latest, a grim and affecting coming-of-age novel. Juno is fighting battles: with her mam, whom she loves but who is extremely strict; with the nuns and priest at her school who enact violence and degradation as punishment; and with herself, as her righteous anger backfires time and again. Her only friend is Seán, nicknamed Legs, and the two bond over their shared whippings at school, each working to protect the other. After a loss in her family, and Legs being sent to juvenile detention for an act of vengeance, Juno drops out of school and begins drinking with her alcoholic father. Slipping into homelessness, Juno lives hard until Legs discovers her and takes her in. But Legs has his own secrets that will turn their reunion to heartbreak. At times the misery feels overwhelming here, but Geary infuses just enough fleeting moments of joy. Likewise, Juno's combination of vulnerability and hard edges lends her a tender toughness that makes it impossible to turn away. Geary's writing is wonderfully revealing and beautiful, particularly when describing characters' clothing, which is often used to show or hide their emotions. Altogether achingly memorable. —*Kathy Sexton*

YA: *Older teens who enjoy heartbreaking, realistic reads will desperately hope for Juno to come out the other side of her grim childhood. KS.*

Kismet.

By Becky Chalsen.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Dutton, paper, $17 (9780593471500); e-book (9780593471517).

High-strung Amy Sharp has always been inseparable from her twin sister, Jo, and her high-school sweetheart (now husband), Ben.

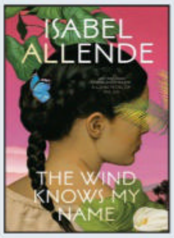
But with Jo getting married to a man she's known for only six months, Amy doesn't feel so close to her anymore. As they gather at Summer Wind, the Sharps' house on Fire Island, for the Fourth of July weekend wedding, families will clash and secrets will be revealed, especially in the form of best man El. El is really Emmett, the groom's best friend but also the man Amy hooked up with while on a break from Ben in college, and he hasn't let go of his broken heart. Now that she and Ben are reeling from a miscarriage, Amy wants to shake up her staid life, but will she risk it all? Chalsen's debut captures the easygoing allure of a boozy weekend getaway on beachy Fire Island the way Elin Hilderbrand depicts Nantucket. A good pick for fans of Nancy Thayer and Jane L. Rosen. —*Susan Maguire*

The Wind Knows My Name.

By Isabel Allende. Tr. by Frances Riddle.

June 2023. 272p. Ballantine, $28 (9780593598108).

Allende (*Violeta*, 2022) is a tirelessly imaginative and enthralling storyteller acutely attuned to the confounding universality of crimes against humanity and the traumas and tragedies they engender. She now dramatizes the interconnectivity of suffering and succor in an ocean- and century-spanning tale that begins in Nazi-assaulted Vienna, where the anguished mother of young Jewish music prodigy Samuel desperately entrusts him to the Kindertransport. Sensitive and sickly, Samuel endures myriad miseries, finally making a home in the Bay Area. In 1981, Leticia and her father flee El Salvador after more than 800 people are murdered in their village by the army in the horrific El Mozote massacre. In the present, Marisol and her precocious, nearly blind young daughter, Anita, are forced to leave El Salvador to escape the escalating violence of an abuser. These disparate lives slowly converge when Selena, a social worker outraged by the brutal treatment of asylum seekers on the U.S./Mexico border, convinces San Francisco corporate lawyer Frank (whose grandparents fled the Sicilian mafia) to take Anita's case pro bono after she is left alone in a detainment center when her mother is shackled and taken away. One of Allende's many powers is creating intriguing, deeply sympathetic characters which she accomplishes with exceptional empathy in this incisive, gripping, and intricately plotted tale of genocide, femicide, exile, survival, compassion, and love. —*Donna Seaman*



HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Allende is always a must-read and readers will queue for her latest mix of history, suspense, emotional insight, social commentary, mysticism, wit, and tenderness.

Life and Other Love Songs.

By Anissa Gray.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Berkley, $27 (9781984802460).

Gray proves herself, as she did in *The Care and Feeding of Ravenously Hungry Girls* (2019), as a master storyteller of family dramas filled with secrets and lies. In 1960s Detroit, Deborah dreams of being the next Diana Ross when she meets shy, ambitious Oz. While he fully supports her singing career, her success means

High-Demand Read-alikes

Tales of Asylum Seekers, Family, and Love

by Donna Seaman

The Wind Knows My Name entwines the stories of a Jewish Holocaust survivor and present-day asylum seekers thwarted at the U.S.–Mexico border in a tale that draws on crimes against humanity, suffering and compassion, courage and love.

Afterlife. By Julia Alvarez. 2020. Algonquin, $25.95 (9781643750255).

The four Vega sisters are wrestling with the challenges of age; they include Antonia, a retired college professor and novelist mourning for her late husband in Vermont when she finds Estela, a pregnant, undocumented teenager, hiding in her garage.

By Blood. By Ellen Ullman. 2012. Picador, $20 (9781250023964).

A disgraced professor rents space in a gothic building in San Francisco, where a neighboring psychologist speaks with a client seeking the truth about her mother, who may have been a Jewish Holocaust survivor.

Far to Go. By Alison Pick. 2011. Harper, $14.99 (9780062034625).

In 1938, with Hitler about to annex the Sudetenland, the Bauers reluctantly place their young son on a Kindertransport train.

The Fortunate Ones. By Ellen Umansky. 2017. Morrow, $26.99 (9780062382481).

The Kindertransport, Nazi-looted art, family, and loss are all dramatized as Rose Zimmer, a former child refugee from Vienna, and American lawyer Lizzie Goldstein join forces.

The Guardians. By Ana Castillo. 2007. Random, $16 (9780812975710).

"I don't think they could come up with a horror movie worse than the situation we got going on en la frontera," muses Milton, an aged, nearly blind man, one of four transfixing voices telling the grim story of life along the U.S.–Mexico border and describing the cruel injustices facing women and asylum seekers.

A Handbook to Luck. By Cristina Garcia. 2007. Vintage, $16 (9780307276803).

Fleeing oppression during the 1970s and '80s, García's characters include Marta, who bravely makes her way to California after escaping a violent husband and war-ravaged El Salvador.

The House of Broken Angels. By Luís Alberto Urrea. 2018. Little, Brown, $27 (9780316154888).

Urrea explores borderland life, Southern California culture, and the immigrant experience via Miguel Angel de la Cruz, a dying patriarch, capturing the anxieties and joys of his extensive family balanced on the borders between generations, El Norte and Mexico, and life and death.

Lost Children Archive. By Valeria Luiselli. 2019. Knopf, $27.95 (9780525520610).

Luiselli's potent novel follows wife-and-husband audio artists and their children as they travel to the Southwest to study Apache life and end up entangled in the crisis on the border surrounding desperate and mistreated Latin American asylum seekers.

The New American. By Micheline Aharonian Marcom. 2020. Simon & Schuster, $26 (9781982120726).

Marcom masterfully navigates the nightmares of America's broken immigration policies as she tracks Emilio, a UC Berkeley student with DACA status, as he is deported to his birth country, Guatemala.

The World That We Knew. By Alice Hoffman. 2019. Simon & Schuster, $27.99 (9781501137570).

Berlin in the 1940s is increasingly terrifying for Jews and Hanni will do anything to keep her daughter safe in Hoffman's mystical and affecting tale of a young Holocaust survivor.

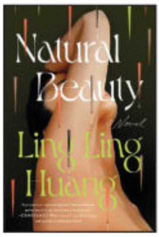
she isn't around enough for their daughter, Trinity, or for Oz—she's the only thing that quiets his inner demons and keeps him from obsessing over the past. He has forever been his brother Tommy's protector, especially from their father, who tried to beat the "sissy" out of him. But in Oz's determination to build a happy life, he effectively pushes away both Deborah, who turns to drink, and Tommy, who uses the Vietnam War as an escape. When Oz disappears on his thirty-seventh birthday, everything falls apart. Gray moves in time to unwind the mystery of Oz's disappearance and to tell the stories of Deborah, Oz, Trinity, and Tommy. Humming with heart and just enough suspense to keep the pages turning, this is arresting. —*Kathy Sexton*

★ Natural Beauty.

By Ling Ling Huang.

Apr. 2023. 272p. Dutton, $27 (9780593472927); e-book (9780593472934).

An unnamed narrator takes the stage in this haunting and immersive novel. Her childhood was intrinsically linked to the piano, as she studied with her talented parents and became a prodigy herself. But her studies at the prestigious conservatory were interrupted by an accident, and now she must give up a life of music for a steady income. She is recruited by Holistik, a boutique company providing innovative skin care and health supplements to consumers. At first, the job seems innocuous, a simple way to earn the money she needs. She becomes immediately infatuated with the shop's potter, Helen; she learns about miracle salves and creams that can stop aging and completely change a person's face. But the deeper she is pulled into Holistik's net, the more she realizes that the company has a sinister side. Huang, an accomplished violinist, brings expertise to her debut, which has already been optioned for television. The novel seamlessly blends sf, literary fiction, suspense, and body horror while also exploring the oppression of the beauty industry and the Chinese immigrant experience in America. The writing is lyrical even when plot events are profoundly tragic, and the protagonist's journey will captivate readers throughout. Highly recommended. —*Cari Dubiel*



Patterns of Orbit.

By Chloe N. Clark.

Apr. 2023. 166p. Baobab, paper, $16.95 (9781936097470).

Drifting into the uncanny, Clark's latest collection of short stories shows people who are often grappling with the edge of time and space. Each tale is a capsule of another world, each with its own problems and ponderings on death, memory, and human existence. In the first story, a woman eats an artificially created peach that evokes memories of her dead husband with every bite, which both unsettles and intrigues her. Meanwhile, a boy named Conor discovers that he can communicate with Dead Ones but soon realizes the burden of his gift when his aunt blinds herself to stop seeing them. Another story explains why the dead aren't buried on Mars; instead, they're burned and sealed into metal cans (but then ghosts begin to appear, of course). Clark masterfully melds genres to create this twilight zone, this window into the center of a vast universe and all of its secrets, and it is terrifying and beautiful. Simply transcendent across all galaxies, *Patterns of Orbit* is a must-read for fans of Ted Chiang. —*Allison Cho*

The People Who Report More Stress.

By Alejandro Varela.

Apr. 2023. 256p. Astra, $26 (9781662601071); e-book (9781662601088).

Varela's collection of 13 interconnected short stories views the world through the eyes of gay men who deal with contemporary worries with varying degrees of exigency. Most of the tales are set in Brooklyn, which inspired the author to share searing commentary about gentrification, racism, sex, and political correctness. "An Other Man" tackles the complexities and overthinking involved when a gay man in a committed relationship is free to see other men. "She and Her Kid and Me and Mine" dramatizes the trepidation involved when a brown gay dad invites a white mom and her child on a play date. "The Great Potato Famine" takes aim at how society is quick to pursue lofty endeavors while forgetting the essentials: "People won't confront anything . . . like heart disease or the world's end if they can't first meet their own needs, like rent or diapers." Varela's stories are provocative and witty; while eliciting chuckles they also dispense uncomfortable truths that everyone thinks about but won't address out loud. —*Andrienne Cruz*

The Rise and Fall of Ava Arcana.

By Jennifer Banash.

Apr. 2023. 312p. Amazon/Lake Union, paper, $16.99 (9781662505416); e-book (9781662505423).

Banash's novel is of the read-in-one-sitting type, each new page adding endless suspense and unpredictable twists. What starts out as a seemingly standard, first-time cover story for inquisitive *Rolling Stone* journalist Kayla McCray quickly turns into the unraveling of one pop star's career and the discovery of a could've-been icon whose life and untimely death had been erased from history. Though the mystery of singer-songwriter Ava Petrova's apparent suicide is at the forefront of this fierce story, adding to its intensity are turbulent female friendships, the desire for success and fame, tricky romantic relationships, and the grim side of the male-dominated music industry. Banash makes every character memorable and dynamic, each with a unique persona. Celebrity Lexi Mayhem is fiery, daring, and defensive. Ava is reserved, humble, yet passionate. Kayla is introspective, gutsy, and overachieving. Banash masterfully interweaves guilt, love, remorse, and yearning with a bit of playfulness, creating a tale that is multifaceted in its content and spirit. —*Sabrina Szos*

YA: *A readily read and lively tale of young people stepping into and figuring out the adult world. SS.*

The Sky above the Roof.

By Nathacha Appanah. Tr. by Geoffrey Strachan.

Apr. 2023. 144p. Graywolf, paper, $15 (9781644452257).

Appanah's latest novel, following *Tropic of Violence* (2020), traces the lives of a family unexpectedly brought together after years apart. Wolf, 17 and prone to panic attacks, lives with his mother, Phoenix, on the outskirts of town. One night he steals Phoenix's car to find his older sister, Paloma, who fled home a decade earlier. When Wolf crashes and is taken into custody, he informs the authorities that he will only speak to Paloma. Old wounds are reopened as the family's collected history unfolds through shifting perspectives. As a child, Phoenix was known as Eliette, a talented singer expected to be nothing but beautiful and obedient, but her fate was forever altered by a traumatizing event. Phoenix purposefully raises her children in a manner she considers the opposite of her own upbringing, then is disheartened when they turn out to be sensitive and emotional. When Paloma leaves home for good, it solidifies their disconnection until the accident forces a reunion. A lyrical and richly human exploration of the disruptive turbulence engendered by family and identity. —*Leah Strauss*

YA: *A contemplative take on lives in upheaval as young characters navigate family expectations that conflict with their own desires. LS.*

Wandering Souls.

By Cecile Pin.

Mar. 2023. 240p. Holt, $26.99 (9781250863461); e-book (9781250863478).

Anh and her younger brothers, Minh and Thanh, have been through everything together. They traveled together by boat out of Vietnam after the fall of Saigon, to a refugee camp, thinking their parents and four younger siblings would soon follow. But tragedy devastates the family, and the three siblings are all alone. They manage to not only survive but to also find comfort in an older woman, Ba, and her grandson, Duc, who is close in age to the boys. They become a makeshift family. Anh dreams of taking the boys to America as her parents had always planned, but relocation services send them to England. Thankfully, Ba and Duc are also in London, but the orphans are still left to navigate a foreign city largely on their own. Anh sacrifices normal adolescence so that she can provide for the boys. Thanh devotes himself to his studies, while Minh rejects education but finds the workforce infuriating with its language and cultural barriers. Pin's debut follows the siblings into adulthood and parenthood, weaving an unforgettable story of dreams, grief, family, and home. —*Courtney Eathorne*

You Are Here.

By Karin Lin-Greenberg.

May 2023. 304p. Counterpoint, $27 (9781640095434).

Lin-Greenberg's masterful and understated debut novel is an engrossing, character-driven story that will delight fans of Liane Moriarty and Celeste Ng. The story unfolds in a mall that is on the brink of closing. Readers meet a hairdresser with unfulfilled dreams, her precocious yet shy son, a kind and driven teenage girl working in the food court, a bookstore manager in a slump, and a seemingly grumpy elderly woman. These divergent characters don't appear to share any connections, but their lives are intertwined in unexpected ways that are slowly revealed as the story progresses. As the mall quite literally decays around them, they must grapple with what the future holds while also dealing with the effects of a tragic event in their community. At its heart, this is a story about our ties to and interactions with others and how our communities impact our actions, influence our aspirations, and shape our identities. Lin-Greenberg beautifully translates the lives of an ordinary group of people into an extraordinary, even triumphant novel. *You Are Here* is sure to be a book club favorite. —*Patricia Smith*

YA: *YAs will appreciate this mall-anchored tale of different yet interconnected characters in flux. PS.*

Crime Fiction

All That Is Hidden.

By Rhys Bowen and Clare Broyles.

Mar. 2023. 320p. Minotaur, $26.99 (9781250808097); e-book (9781250808103).

Former private detective Molly Murphy Sullivan is happy living in Greenwich Village with her policeman husband Daniel, along with their toddler son and teenage ward. Her life has held many surprises, but nothing like the one Daniel has for her when he announces he is giving up his captain's position with the NYPD to run for sheriff of New York City on the Tammany Hall ticket. Worse yet, they will be moving to an upscale residence on Fifth Avenue. The usually indomitable Molly is unsettled by the new house, intimidated by the servants, and uncomfortable in her new role in society as a politician's wife. When Big Bill McKenzie, Daniel's new boss, who is running for mayor, is found dead in a locked room, Molly finds it's up to her to sort it out. This satisfying nineteenth entry in a perennially best-selling historical mystery series (following *Wild Irish Rose,* 2022) moves the characters ahead to 1907 and is the second to be coauthored by Bowen's daughter, Clare Broyles. —*Jane Murphy*

Dead Man Inside.

By Vincent Starrett.

Mar. 2023. 288p. Penzler/American Mystery Classics, $25.95 (9781613163917).

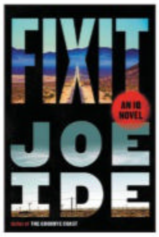
Starrett (1886–1974) was a Chicago journalist and one of the world's foremost experts on Sherlock Holmes. He wrote first-rate Golden Age mysteries, including a series of three books published between 1929 and 1932 and featuring amateur detective Walter Ghost. Ghost is a self-proclaimed dilettante, aptly named, as he has a somewhat shadowy presence, and, ironically, he goes to great lengths to pan Holmes' esoteric methods. This book is another entry in Otto Penzler's remarkable American Mystery Classics series. Penzler provides the introductions to some of the volumes in the series, including this one, in which he notes the novel's catchy opening: a sign in a shop window that reads DEAD MAN INSIDE! Enter Ghost on the mend from an appendectomy. Subsequent murders make it appear that it is a most curious case—"one murderer killing another murderer—the second murderer killed perhaps by a third murderer . . ." Full of puns and literary humor, including detectives named Kelly and Sheets instead of Keats and Shelley, and a Ouija board session with a chatty "haint" on the celestial line. A bibliophile's delight. —*Jane Murphy*

Fixit.

By Joe Ide.

May 2023. 336p. Little, Brown/Mulholland, $28 (9780316531085); e-book (9780316531115).

In *Smoke* (2021), Isaiah "IQ" Quintabe left the not-so-friendly confines of East Long Beach to put himself back together after his lover and soulmate, Grace, reluctantly broke up with him, his ever-fraught lifestyle as a PI for the disenfranchised having left her permanently afraid and overwhelmed. Isaiah's attempt to distance himself from his peril-plagued career was a spectacular failure, of course, and now matters are even worse. Grace has been kidnapped by one of Isaiah's many enemies, hitman and all-around psycho Skip Hanson. With the action jumping between Grace's attempts to escape the clutches of both Skip and his addlepated mother, a Ma Barker–type with parenting issues, and Isaiah's equally determined efforts—aided by his running buddy, the irrepressible Dodson—to rescue Grace, Ide ably manages his usual trick of mixing comic turns (Dodson carrying most of the water in that regard) with ramped-up tension (the RPMs are at shrieking level pretty much from the get-go). And, yet, there is something new here, fighting to be heard: a deep note of all-prevailing sadness, whether in Isaiah and Grace's failing struggle to avoid the ignorant armies clashing by night all around them, or Skip and his mom, poised for battle but wondering "how did they get here in this fucked-up kitchen with wrecked bodies and the reek of spoiled food in their nostrils and dried blood on their clothes?" —*Bill Ott*



For You and Only You.

By Caroline Kepnes.

Apr. 2023. 448p. Random, $28 (9780593133811); e-book (9780593133835).

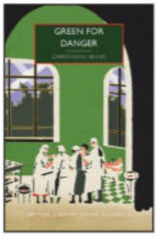
Joe Goldberg, the focus of Netflix's binge-worthy *You,* first appeared in print, giving readers a taste of life inside the incongruously likable serial killer's mind. After an unfortunate end to his relationship with Mary Kay DiMarco (in *You Love Me,* 2021), Joe moves to Boston, where he has been accepted for a Harvard writing fellowship led by Pulitzer winner Glenn Shoddy. True to form, Joe finds true love with one of his fellow writers, Wonder, who dazzles him with her talent and vulnerability. They bond over their working-class roots, united against the elites. Clocking Wonder's family's abuses of her loyalty and Glenn's misogynist bent, Joe's urges to eliminate obstacles resurface. But this time he's making big mistakes, and the release of a new podcast on his murders in Bainbridge puts him in the crosshairs of another fellow who aspires to write a true-crime best-seller. It's messy, as things can be for obsessing psychopaths, and Joe's stream-of-consciousness narration reflects his growing panic. Within this intensity, though, his snark-laden observations about ego, love, and loyalty ring true. —*Christine Tran*

Green for Danger.

By Christianna Brand.

Apr. 2023. 288p. Poisoned Pen, paper, $14.99 (9781728267661).

Fans of the British TV series *Foyle's War* and of historical novels like Jennifer Ryan's *The Spies of Shilling Lane* (2019) should love this Golden Age thriller in the British Library's Crime Classics collection. Set in 1942 in heavily bombed Kent and published two years later, the novel has an on-the-ground reporting feel to it that adds to its bite (an author's note explains how Brand herself lived through many air raids). Postman Joseph Higgins is delivering letters to the seven doctors and nurses assigned to a hastily organized military hospital in Kent when an air raid hits the hospital, leaving the postman with a shattered thigh. Higgins dies on the operating table, and a local detective inspector conducts a routine investigation of what seems an accidental death. That assumption is overturned after one of the medical staff is found on the same operating table, stabbed twice in the chest. One operating room, seven doctors and nurses, and a baffling case hinging on the seeming impossibility of anyone getting away with murder with six other witnesses surrounding the killer make this a tantalizing puzzle. A movie version of this mystery, with the same title, appeared in 1946, written and directed by Sidney Gilliat, the screenwriter for Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes*. —*Connie Fletcher*



The Housemate.

By Sarah Bailey.

Mar. 2023. 400p. Polis, $27.99 (9781951709969); e-book (9781957957265).

Australian Bailey, best-selling author of the

Gemma Woodstock trilogy—*The Dark Lake* (2017), *Into the Night* (2018), and *Where the Dead Go* (2019)—returns with her first standalone thriller. Reporter Olive Groves is no stranger to the Housemate Homicide story. In fact, she covered it nine years ago for *Melbourne Today*. A Melbourne University woman was found dead in a house share. One roommate went missing, and the other was accused of her murder. What happened to the missing roommate? Nine years later, after the missing roommate turns up dead, Olive is once again assigned to the story. This time she must team up with Cooper Ng, a young podcaster, to solve the nearly decade-old mystery. Dark secrets are revealed that threaten Olive's safety and cause her to recall disturbing memories from her past and question the people closest to her. Bailey explores multiple motives such as drugs, prostitution, and child pornography. Her sophisticated, multilayered plot will have readers longing for more books about this intriguing new leading lady. —*Jayme Oldham*

The Last Word.

By Taylor Adams.

Apr. 2023. 352p. Morrow, $28.99 (9780063222892); e-book (9780063222915).

Emma Carpenter suffered a terrible tragedy, ending up homeless and penniless. Taking a job as a house sitter on a remote island on the Washington coast, she spends her days reading e-books, walking her dog, and communicating with her neighbor, Deek, using a telescope and a whiteboard since she has no desire to meet anyone face-to-face. She's in a holding pattern until she can take the backpack of rocks she keeps by her back door and walk into the ocean. But then she does something out of character, writing a review on Amazon of one of the e-books she's read. She gives it one star, and almost immediately, the author begins sending her increasingly threatening messages. As the situation escalates, Emma senses impending doom, and she's right—in a single night of terrible violence and bloodshed, her worst nightmares come true. The imaginative and thoroughly original plot features bewildering and bizarre twists and a totally unexpected ending. Adams' modern-day Gothic effectively blends horror and thriller and is guaranteed to keep readers off-balance with its intensity and overall creepiness. —*Emily Melton*

The Lie Maker.

By Linwood Barclay.

May 2023. 352p. Morrow, $30 (9780063276246); e-book (9780063276260).

Jack Givins, an author with a couple of unsuccessful novels under his belt, gets a new job: writing fictional backstories for people who were given new identities by the U.S. government's witness-protection program. The job pays well and, as it happens, dovetails nicely with Jack's own personal history. He's kept a secret from his new boss, but it turns out he's not the only one keeping secrets. The latest thriller from Barclay (following *Take Your Breath Away*, 2022) asks the reader to accept a slightly out-there premise but delivers a tightly plotted, surprising novel that winds up explaining why the premise wasn't really so out-there at all. It's the kind of thriller Barclay does so well: a story that constantly changes direction and forces readers to reconsider their notions of what the book is actually about. We soon find, when reading Barclay, that it's better simply to put ourselves in the author's hands and enjoy the ride, because trying to guess what's going to happen is a fruitless exercise. —*David Pitt*

A Midsummer Night's Scheme.

By Harper Kincaid.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Crooked Lane, $26.99 (9781643856308); e-book (9781643856315).

Bookbinder Quinn Caine has just recovered from her last encounter with a murderer and is enjoying an outdoor concert in Vienna, Virginia, with friends, her police detective boyfriend, and her German shepherd, RBG—Ruff Barker Ginsburg. Making a surprise appearance at the performance is Chad Frivole, a local kid turned Broadway star. While Chad is on stage, Quinn notices a trio of his past girlfriends whispering. The next day, Quinn and RBG meet her cousin, formerly Liz but now Sister Daria, a postulate at the local convent, and her dog, Rueger, for a visit to the canine bakery. To their surprise, Chad stops in and flirts with Daria, also a past girlfriend. As he leaves, he drives erratically and crashes. When the paramedics extract him, they find several varieties of poisonous snakes and a handwritten note quoting *Romeo and Juliet*. Quinn and Daria stay out of the case but only until a nest of poisonous spiders is found in the bed of Quinn's older brother. This cozy has it all: a literary connection, several budding romances, brave dogs, long-simmering jealousies, and creepy weapons. —*Karen Muller*

Not the Ones Dead.

By Dana Stabenow.

Apr. 2023. 336p. IPG/Head of Zeus, $29.99 (9781804540169).

Alaskan private investigator Kate Shugak returns in the twenty-third novel in Stabenow's popular, award-winning series. Two aircraft collide in midair; there are several fatalities, among them a man who appears to have died before the planes collided. His death has the earmarks of an assassination. But who is the victim, and why was he killed? Kate follows the trail of clues somewhere she isn't expecting it to lead and uncovers secrets whose revelations could put her own life and the lives of the people around her in grave jeopardy. With the Shugak books, readers come for the mystery and stay for the fine writing; with richly developed characters and evocative descriptions of the landscape, they're a joy to read. Kate continues to be a captivating series lead, a woman whose mixture of toughness and vulnerability makes her feel very much like a real person. Series fans will devour the book, and newcomers will wonder why they've waited so long to take this trip to Alaska. —*David Pitt*

The Numbers.

By Nick Pirog.

Mar. 2023. 350p. Blackstone, paper, $15.99 (9781982673925).

Pirog's last Nicholas Prescott novel, *Jungle Up* (2021), had an unusual structuring device. The opening was about one thing—an old flame's frantic plea for help. Then, out of nowhere, it became about something else—a treasure hunt along the Amazon. He's at it again. Ex-cop Prescott is investigating the murder of a co-ed, the daughter of the richest man in Seattle, and then, suddenly, he's not. The police ask for Prescott's help in clearing up the slaughter of a few thugs, who are connected to an especially dodgy corner of the numbers racket. The numbers carved into their foreheads seem tied to numerology in dream books. Pirog explains this at great length, and readers may start to long for that dead co-ed. Still, Pirog's gifts as an action writer and a creator of sharp, quick prose save the day, even given the long sessions of beer pong, pickup basketball, and family history. Perhaps anxious readers should simply read this as it was written. What's the hurry? Slow down and enjoy another round of beer pong. —*Don Crinklaw*

The Schoolhouse.

By Sophie Ward.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Vintage, paper, $17 (9780593469262); e-book (9780593469279).

The Schoolhouse was a 1970s experimental school. Isobel was a student there and established some unusual friendships, but she also acquired dangerous frenemies. The adolescent physical and psychic trauma she suffered resulted in deafness and a host of phobias, but she gets by working at a London library, living an otherwise isolated life. Her safe world is threatened, however, when she receives a letter from a former teacher and becomes involved in the police investigation of a local girl's disappearance. Half of the story is told through the young Isobel's diary entries and her adult internalizations, riddled with confusion and guilt. The other half, intertwined, is a police procedural. It's an interesting combination, sometimes confusing but somehow made compelling by the distinctly drawn female characters. The author has a unique crime-fiction qualification, being an actor who made her film debut in *Young Sherlock Holmes*. Her impressive (non-mystery) fiction debut, *Love and Other Thought Experiments,* was longlisted for the Booker in 2020. —*Jane Murphy*

The Soulmate.

By Sally Hepworth.

Apr. 2023. 336p. St. Martin's, $28.99 (9781250229700); e-book (9781250229724).

Pippa believes that she and her husband, Gabe, left their "dark period" behind in Melbourne when they relocated to a beachfront Portsea home. After recovering from a devastating depression, Gabe has leveraged his magnetic charisma to prevent seven suicides on the cliff behind their new property. But the couple's fragile happiness crumbles with the end of Gabe’s life-saving streak: as Pippa watches from the window, a despairing woman turns her back on Gabe and plunges to her death. Pippa’s concerns about a resurgence of Gabe’s depression become tinged with suspicion when she discovers that Gabe hid his connection to Amanda Cameron, the woman who died on the cliff. As police investigate links between Amanda’s suicide and organized crime, Gabe’s behavior becomes erratic, and the betrayals and crimes underlying his “dark period” are slowly revealed. How far will Gabe go to protect the family? Sympathetic characters combined with powerful themes of guilt, love, and loyalty will lead readers to consider the power of self-delusion. Recommended for fans of Liane Moriarty and Fiona Barton. —*Christine Tran*

Sunset Empire.

By Josh Weiss.

Mar. 2023. 358p. Grand Central, $28 (9781538719473); e-book (9781538719466).

Morris Baker is an L.A. private eye in the late 1950s, endowed by his creator with all the tropes common to the type: boozer; ex-cop; on the outs with the law; given to cracking wise. But there’s one big difference: Baker has a very dark past; in WWII, he was a death camp Sonderkommando, delivering fellow Jews to the gas chambers. Now, in this wild roller coaster ride of a novel, he’s attempting to make sense of an alternate world where Joe McCarthy is president, Ike is in limbo, and Edward R. Murrow is a fugitive. Baker is asked by the wife of a State Department consultant to find her missing husband, Henry Kissinger. Meanwhile, there’s the matter of a purported terrorist attack involving a Korean American. Plenty of historical figures pop up along the way: producer Darryl F. Zanuck is restarting his career by making porn films. As he did in the series debut, *Beat the Devils* (2022), Weiss makes all this work by keeping firm control of his zingy material. And the ending is so powerful one looks away from the page. —*Don Crinklaw*

With My Little Eye.

By Joshilyn Jackson.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Morrow, $28.99 (9780063158658); e-book (9780063158672).

In this creepy psychological thriller, actress Meribel Mills struggles to fend off a nameless, faceless stalker. After marrying her college sweetheart right after graduation, Meribel is blissful until it all goes bad. Following a painful divorce, she moves to L.A. to pursue her dream of becoming an actress and manages to land a plum role in a sitcom. Unfortunately, her new life, complete with hunky boyfriend, is destroyed when a stalker whom she dubs Marker Man threatens her in a series of increasingly violent letters written in vivid Magic Marker. The police won’t take action, so when she’s offered a role in a TV series shooting in her hometown of Atlanta, Meribel dumps her friends and boyfriend and flees back home. Not so fast; the stalker has followed her. Readers will be as hard-pressed as Meribel to discover the identity of Marker Man, with Jackson throwing in red herrings aplenty and keeping Meribel mystified and unnerved until the cataclysmic conclusion. Psychologically damaged but charismatic characters, a riveting plot, and taut suspense make this a fine pick for suspense fans. —*Emily Melton*

Historical Fiction

Ada’s Room.

By Sharon Dodua Otoo. Tr. by Jon Cho-Polizzi.

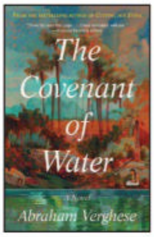
Mar. 2023. 352p. Riverhead, $28 (9780593539798).

Otoo’s literary first novel features a fragmented narrative spanning from the fifteenth century to the near-present and loosely linking the different segments with a fertility bracelet and a woman who repeatedly reincarnates as Ada. In 1459 on Africa’s Gold Coast, Ada has just lost her baby when the Portuguese come ashore. In 1838, Ada’s two passions are mathematics and her affair with Charles Dickens. In 1945, Ada suffers the horrors of forced prostitution in the Dora concentration camp. In 2019, a pregnant Ada has emigrated from Ghana to Germany. Otoo draws on some characters from history, including the nineteenth-century mathematician Ada Lovelace, who has a more dramatic end here than in her real life. A blithe God makes frequent appearances in a variety of guises, and the narrator, curiously, is a different object in each story line: a broom, door knocker, passport, even Ada’s room in the “special barracks” of the concentration camp. There are asides to the reader, and the prose occasionally reads like free verse poetry. A creative and impressionistic meditation on themes of feminism, racism, belonging, and motherhood. —*Bethany Latham*

★ The Covenant of Water.

By Abraham Verghese.

May 2023. 736p. Grove, $30 (9780802162175); e-book (9780802162182).



Instantly and utterly absorbing is the so-worth-the-long-wait new novel by the author of *Cutting for Stone* (2009). Spanning 70 years, it opens with the 1900 marriage of a 12-year-old girl to a 40-year-old widower with a young child. The couple belong to India’s Saint Thomas Christian community, descendants of St. Thomas’ converts after his arrival in present-day Kerala almost two millennia prior. While toddler JoJo immediately accepts the bride as his mother, the groom maintains a watchful distance until she is ready for a husband. She matures into Big Ammachi, the beloved matriarch of Parambil, the family’s 500-acre estate. She births two children, a daughter who never outgrows a five-year-old’s delight and a son whose wanderings finally bring him home to stay. Always looming is “the Condition,” a mysterious history of drowning that claims a victim in every generation. Meanwhile, in faraway Glasgow, orphaned Digby becomes a doctor against impossible odds and escapes his tragic past to become a privileged white man in British India. His trajectory as a promising surgeon, estate owner, and gentle caretaker inevitably overlaps with many of Parambil’s inhabitants. Verghese—who gifts the matriarch his mother’s name and even some of her stories—illuminates colonial history, challenges castes and classism, and exposes injustices, all while spectacularly spinning what will undoubtedly be one of the most lauded, awarded, best-selling novels of the year. —*Terry Hong*

The Cuban Heiress.

By Chanel Cleeton.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Berkley, paper, $17 (9780593440483).

September 1934. The glamorous SS *Morro Castle* cruise ship is on its final, fateful trip between New York and Havana. Cubana Elena Reyes is boarding, anxious that her phony papers may not pass muster since she is officially dead. Faux heiress Catherine narrates her own boarding process as she is accompanied by her fiancé, Raymond, his daughter, and her nanny. Nothing is what it seems in Cleeton’s latest gripping historical novel, following *Our Last Days in Barcelona* (2022). As she weaves together Elena and Catherine’s stories, told in alternating chapters, she also brings to life their fascinating, volatile time. Handsome con men, clever thieves, desperate rebels, and our valiant heroines all convene on this elegant but doomed ocean liner. As the women walk a high wire, working to wrest justice from a society in which all the odds are stacked against them, they face a tragic fate in the fire and foam of the impending shipwreck. Cleeton includes vivid details about the mysterious final voyage of the *Morro Castle* and provides further reading about this historic disaster. —*Sara Martinez*

The Dutch Orphan.

By Ellen Keith.

Apr. 2023. 400p. Park Row, paper, $18.99 (9780778311966); e-book (9780369716033).

The cracks in Johanna and Liesbeth’s ’ relationship start as small fissures, but by the time WWII envelops the Netherlands, the two sisters are on the verge of splitting apart forever. While Johanna begins to organize secret night concerts for Jewish artists in Amsterdam, her newlywed sister Liesbeth watches as her husband’s ambition and commitment to a fascist political party drags them deeper into collaboration with the occupiers, illustrating the rationalizations allowing citizens to tolerate the increasing disruptions to their lives and the trade-offs they’re willing to make to survive. While Liesbeth tries unsuccessfully to start the family she always dreamed of, Johanna finds that her unexpected pregnancy brings both heartbreak and the chance to save at least one person from the relentless Nazi campaign to eradicate Jews. As Amsterdam is slowly ground beneath German jackboots over the war years, the sisters’ diverging paths eloquently explore how small decisions build to life-altering consequences and whether a path to forgiveness is possible. —*Bridget Thoreson*

The Gifts.
By Liz Hyder.

Apr. 2023. 448p. Sourcebooks, $27.99 (9781728271705); e-book (9781728271729).

In England in 1840, at the crossroads of belief in religion and science, when society has very strict requirements on gender roles, the lives of five people unravel. Etta is an outcast gentlewoman who suddenly and painfully sprouts wings. Edward Meake, a struggling surgeon intent on making a name for himself in London, stumbles across a deceased woman with wings. Mary Ward is a journalist in a man's world, and it is through her efforts that the lives of the other characters are linked. Natalya is a woman who has been forced to leave her past behind and start anew, but the stunning growth of wings was not part of her future plans. Finally, Annie, Edward's wife, is discovering that the life society has mapped for her does not make her happy. A theme through the tale is how most men overlook the women around them, and how the women themselves are only happy when they rebel and take charge over their own lives. Readers who like the early-Victorian-era setting and feisty female characters will enjoy this book. —*Rebecca Gerber*

The Last Heir to Blackwood Library.
By Hester Fox.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Graydon, paper, $17.99 (9781525804786).

Ivy, orphaned and near destitute from her losses in WWI and its aftermath, finds herself heiress to a great title and estate. She is whisked away to the wilds of Yorkshire with hardly a blink or a probing question. The house is forbidding, as are the servants. How could she possibly belong there? The library, locked away, is the saving grace—or so she thinks. Bizarre things happen as she loans out some of the books, and she feels her memory turning to mush. She is courted by a handsome young lord: friend or enemy, she can't tell. It becomes obvious that the library is more than a room with books, it is an entity. Is it something to be embraced or feared? She is told the legends again and again but forgets what she has learned. There is great danger, some romance, and ultimately, questions are answered. Combining history, the occult, human greed, and a touch of feminism, this is a fine addition to the gothic genre. —*Danise Hoover*

To Die Beautiful.
By Buzzy Jackson.

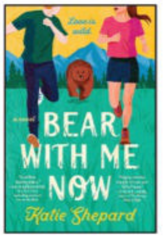
May 2023. 448p. Dutton, $28 (9780593187210); e-book (9780593187227).

After the assassination of a high-ranking SS officer in a cobblestoned alley, word begins to spread about the Girl with Red Hair. But Hannie Schaft's journey to becoming a fighter for the Dutch Resistance started long before that night, told step by gripping step in this novel based on the true story of a woman who, in her early 20s, hunted down Nazi officers and Dutch collaborators during WWII. The timid, studious university student who once dreamed of becoming a League of Nations lawyer undertakes steadily more risky acts of defiance against the occupiers, from merely delivering supplies to stealing IDs to carrying a loaded gun. She conceals her Jewish friends and begins to fall for a fellow Resistance fighter, working to find any act, no matter how small, to combat the enemy. Exquisitely balanced between cloak-and-dagger secrecy, the grinding realities of waiting out your quarry, and the crushing fear of discovery, *To Die Beautiful* displays the courage and power of a woman committed to doing what is right in a world gone terribly wrong. —*Bridget Thoreson*

Romance

★ Bear with Me Now.
By Katie Shepard.

Apr. 2023. 416p. Berkley, paper, $17 (9780593549292); e-book (9780593549308).



Shepard's wonderful debut romance features characters who are so beautifully depicted, they become real. Teagan, who lives an elite life of wealth and privilege and runs a foundation to bring art to children, would seem to have little in common with navy veteran Darcy, whose learning challenges have kept her from the successes she has worked toward in college and as a forest ranger. They meet when Teagan takes a walk in the woods and runs into a bear while he and his sister are at a rehab-spa in Montana. Teagan is recovering from a stint in a psych ward following a panic attack so severe he thought he was dying and now nearly becomes a bear snack. He is rescued by Darcy, who was hired as the wilderness therapy instructor but has been doing all the maintenance for the new-agey resort. Darcy focuses on helping Teagan, however off-track she is about his issues, and insists on accompanying him to New York when his foundation is threatened. Shepard seamlessly incorporates Teagan's mental-health struggles and Darcy's learning differences as they help each other fight their personal demons. This exquisite combination of issues, humor, and hot sex make Shepard a writer to watch. —*Diana Tixier Herald*

The Do-Over.
By Suzanne Park.

Apr. 2023. 384p. Avon, paper, $16.99 (9780063216051); e-book (9780063216068).

When Lily Lee finds out 10 years later that her final college courses did not count toward her graduation, she gets the chance to go back to her undergrad years. But not only does she have to put her life on hold to make up the class credits and live on campus, her TA is none other than her college sweetheart, Jake Cho. As Lily navigates her new/old college life, she struggles with major anxiety issues. As a professional author, she's worried that the fact that she didn't graduate will get out and discredit all of her hard work, and fellow authors are sniffing around even as her PR friend, Mia, is determined to support her. Then there's Jake, who is more than willing to prove his loyalty to Lily. It's a fun and sexy book, as Park (*So We Meet Again*, 2021) ties in mental-health issues with a strong female protagonist and of course a little bit of love. A fast read full of funny moments among friends, tense moments between rivals, and romantic moments between old lovers. —*Emily Borsa*

Forged in Love.
By Mary Connealy.

Mar. 2023. 304p. Bethany, paper, $16.99 (9780764241130); e-book (9781493440702).

While returning home to Pine Valley, Wyoming, after a family funeral, Mariah Stover's father and brother are killed by the notorious Deadeye Gang. She is trapped under the stagecoach and left for dead. Mariah recovers but has amnesia. Mariah's friends encourage her to leave town because the Deadeye Gang is known to kill all witnesses. But she is determined to continue running her family's blacksmith shop. Clint Roberts, the owner and chef extraordinaire of the town diner, does what he can to keep her safe, but she continues to be plagued with accidents, including a snake bite and an explosion. Clint proposes marriage, but in 1870 the only acceptable careers for a married woman are being a wife or working in her husband's business. Mariah is determined to honor her father's memory by working as the town's only blacksmith; she is also an ardent supporter of the suffrage movement and won't give that up to marry. The first novel in Connealy's new Wyoming Sunrise series offers strong female characters and a richly developed historical backdrop. —*C. L. Quillen*

Just as You Are.
By Camille Kellogg.

Apr. 2023. 320p. Dial, paper, $17 (9780593594704); e-book (9780593594711).

Liz and her three roommates, Jane, Lydia, and Katie, all work at *Nether Fields*, a magazine for queer women, nonbinary people, and trans people, and each roommate has their own responsibilities and varying degrees of success. When new owners acquire the financially struggling magazine, Liz regrets her lost chance to focus on her fiction writing. When she meets one of the new owners, Daria feels like it might be the worst—or best—experience of her life. Could their spark become a flame? Debut romance novelist Kellogg cleverly and subtly mixes aspects of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sex in the City* as she charts the bumpy path Liz and Daria find themselves on. The result is a solid rom-com with lots of witty pop-culture references and a full cast of LGBTQ+ characters representing different identities and experiences. The Q&A with the author and reading group guide are useful additions. Kellogg's first romance seems like a natural starter for a series of novels and perhaps even a screen adaptation. —*Stacey Hayman*

Lassiter.

By J. R. Ward.

Apr. 2023. 480p. Gallery, $28.99 (9781982180027); e-book (9781982180065).

Lassiter, the black-and-blond-haired, *Golden Girls*–loving fallen angel, feels like damaged goods since the demon Davinia assaulted him, so he's willing to love Rahvyn from afar. But when two fellow angels, Eddie and Adrian, show up to take him to see the Creator to account for all the meddling he's done in the lives of the vampires, he knows his time is short, so he opens his heart. But Rahvyn is no ordinary vampire. She has extraordinary powers, evident when she saves George, the guide dog of the Blind King Wrath. Meanwhile, the Lessening Society is back or attempting to come back, and the Black Dagger Brotherhood jumps into the fray. Ward's latest in the Black Dagger Brotherhood series (after *Lover Arisen*, 2022) has it all—danger, sex, violent action, swoon-worthy romance, and an ending that will leave readers reeling. Seriously. Newbies will want to start at the beginning (*Dark Lover*, 2005), but series fans will love Lassiter's long-anticipated story that tempers its broody darkness with odd moments of humor, as befits the character. —*Susan Maguire*

The Metropolitan Affair.

By Jocelyn Green.

Mar. 2023. 400p. Bethany, paper, $16.99 (9780764239632); e-book (9781493440634).

The
METROPOLITAN
AFFAIR
JOCELYN GREEN

New York City in the Roaring Twenties provides the glittering backdrop to Green's (*Veiled in Smoke*, 2020) captivating tale about art forgery and Egyptology. Dr. Lauren Westlake has made a name for herself as the assistant curator of Egyptian art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art at a time when few women have the means or education for such a career. As children, Lauren and Joe Caravello met at the Met and now, as a police detective, Joe seeks her out for assistance in connecting art forgery to a shooting at a speakeasy that landed his partner in jail. Meanwhile, Lauren's father is working on acquiring items for the new Egyptology museum he plans to open in Newport, Rhode Island. Lauren's relationship with her father has always been difficult, and she struggles with conflicting emotions when he offers her the opportunity that she longed for as a child, to go on an expedition with him in Egypt. Green presents the perfect combination of well-developed characters, sweet romance, a glimpse into history, and a fascinating, well-researched mystery. Fans of Elizabeth Camden and Elizabeth Peters will be delighted by the start of this new series. —*C. L. Quillen*

YA: *Teens will love the mix of history, glitz, and sweet romance while relating to Lauren's complicated relationship with her father.* CLQ.

The Plus One.

By Mazey Eddings.

Apr. 2023. 336p. St. Martin's/Griffin, paper, $16.99 (9781250847041); e-book (9781250847058).

Eddings' romances, including *Lizzie Blake's Best Mistake* (2022), are refreshingly unique while each is distinctly different; all address serious issues in a hilarious and rewardingly steamy way. Her latest is the most serious yet, with characters coping with mental health issues that include PTSD, but Eddings manages to weave a funny and heartfelt romance around this somber topic. Indira and Jude are like oil and water, and have been since childhood. Jude just happens to be the best friend of Indira's brother, Collin, and therefore has been a constant presence. Until he left to become a traveling doctor treating victims of disasters and crises. When he returns home after years away for a brief reprieve to attend Collin's wedding, he is close to crumbling. Indira battles her own demons in the form of abandonment issues; ever since her dad left, she's tiptoed through relationships and never really committed. When Jude and Indira are thrown together during the wedding preparations, they are surprised to find solace in each other's company and their passion slowly kindles toward a satisfying end. —*Patricia Smith*

A Rogue's Rules for Seduction.

By Eva Leigh.

Apr. 2023. 368p. Avon, paper, $9.99 (9780063086296); e-book (9780063082694).

Willa Ransome is in hell. That is, she is in a lovely manor house on a remote island in the Scottish Hebrides, but still, she is miserable. That's because among the guests attending Oliver Longbridge's scandalous house party is the one man Willa has absolutely no desire to ever see again, Dominic Kilburn. A year ago, Dom, who swore he would love Willa to the end of time, left her standing at the altar, thus making Willa the laughingstock of London. Now, Dom is back, and all Willa's efforts over the last year to banish him from her life forever seem for naught. Because no matter how mad she might be at Dom, Willa can't ignore the truth that he is still the only man for her. The latest in Leigh's Last Chance Scoundrels series, following *How the Wallflower Was Won* (2022), is a smartly conceived and beautifully realized second-chance-at-romance love story that is richly imbued with strong emotions, steamy sensuality, and Leigh's sharp wit. —*John Charles*

Said No One Ever.

By Stephanie Eding.

Apr. 2023. 320p. Sourcebooks/Casablanca, paper, $16.99 (9781728239972).

When Ellie Reed books a three-week stay on Airbnb for a tiny cabin in Montana, she's hoping to use this vacation to rest and reset. She broke up with her longtime boyfriend and is on the verge of losing her job, so Ellie just needs somewhere quiet to think. She's had enough of her family's opinions on what she should do with her life. But when Ellie gets to the cabin, her vacation is anything but restful. First, the Airbnb host, Marilyn, is taken to the hospital. When Ellie goes to check on her, she forms a bond with the spunky octogenarian. And then Marilyn's grumpy but attractive grandson, Warren, shows up. Suddenly Ellie is caught up in a scheme with Warren to help Marilyn keep her farm; will Ellie be able to keep her heart from Warren? Funny and heartwarming, Eding's latest is a cute, contemporary romance about one woman's life-changing experience on the vacation she never could have expected that will leave readers with a smile after turning the last page. —*LynnDee Wathen*

The Secret Service of Tea and Treason.

By India Holton.

Apr. 2023. 368p. Berkley, paper, $17 (9780593547267); e-book (9780593547274).

The raucous fun of Holton's Dangerous Damsels series continues, following *The League of Gentlewomen Witches* (2022), this time featuring A.U.N.T., a covert spy agency of household servants. It keeps track of the activities of the Wicken League's witches and pirates as well as ensuring "spoiled rich girls were kept from killing one another on shopping sprees." Alice, a lady's maid and accomplished agent known as A, is teamed up with Daniel, known as B, to infiltrate a pirate flying-house party. The two agents must pretend to be a newlywed couple, leading to compromising positions amidst melees and spying; they frequently find themselves piled up behind furniture with real pirates who broke into the same room. Anyone not utterly exhausted by the incessant word play will delight in Holton's adventurous romp that wittily second-guesses itself and is jam-packed with flagrant innuendo. Bookish protagonists who proclaim, "reading is not a hobby . . . it is a way of life" and hope for a decent library at their destination will delight readers who can never leave home without a book. —*Diana Tixier Herald*

Sizzle Reel.

By Carlyn Greenwald.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Vintage, paper, $17 (9780593468197); e-book (9780593468180).

Los Angeles-based Greenwald draws on her time in film school to lend a fresh Gen Z authenticity to her debut adult romance about an anxious twentysomething trying to make it in Hollywood while struggling to be confident about coming out as bisexual. Luna Roth dreams of becoming a cinematographer and is hoping for an industry boost from her boss, a two-faced talent agent, when she meets an up-and-coming movie star, Valeria Sullivan. Their low-key flirtation could be the start of her big break or spell disaster for both their careers. Luna reveals her sexual orientation to her closest friends, Wyatt and Romy, and is eager to finally lose her virginity to

Continued on p.40

Self-Published Books Showcase

These books are recommended by *BlueInk Review,* a fee-based review service. Every month, *BlueInk* will compile a list of their favorite self-published titles for *Booklist,* as a service to librarians hoping to incorporate self-published work into their collections. *BlueInk* was founded by Patti Thorn, former book review editor of Denver's *Rocky Mountain News*, and Patricia Moosbrugger, a literary agent who represents several best-selling authors. The company delivers professional, unbiased reviews of self-published books written by critics drawn largely from major mainstream publications and by editors from prominent publishing houses. Stars reflect the decisions of *BlueInk* reviewers and editors. *Booklist* is happy to bring this curated collection of the best in self-publishing for adults and youth to our audience.

from

blueink REVIEW

Adult

Azabu Getaway.

By Michael Pronko.

2022. 330p. Raked Gravel, paper, $25.99 (9781942410287).

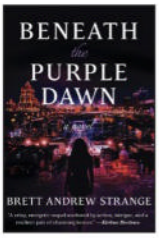
Pronko's fifth engaging Detective Hiroshi Shimizu novel, starring a forensic accountant who investigates white-collar crimes for the Tokyo police department, opens with American investment banker Patrick Walsh breaking into his Tokyo condominium to retrieve his young daughters. His wife is divorcing him, and he wants to move his daughters to Wyoming, where he's been working for nine months. Then the story abruptly shifts to the high-rise office of Nine Dragons Wealth Management, where a manager discovers his boss murdered. Eventually, it's revealed that Patrick works for Nine Dragons, moving clients' money in and out of shell companies in Wyoming. Detective Hiroshi is tasked with investigating the murder. It takes time for the two narratives to merge, and readers may become impatient. However, when the connection is finally uncovered about a third of the way through the novel, readers will be racing through pages. Pronko, who's lived in Japan for 20 years, skillfully reveals aspects of Japanese life, describing in tantalizing detail, for example, local nightlife, including where cops gather after work. Pronko serves up another satisfying and vivid thriller.

★ Beneath the Purple Dawn.

By Brett Andrew Strange.

2022. 240p. Atlas, paper, $15.95 (9781736999684).

This thrilling tale of international espionage picks up after the events of Strange's *Against the Dusk* (2021). Katya Volkova is training herself to fight the shadowy villain Perses, who tortured her after killing her family. Her lover, American war veteran Paul Drake, is equally committed to taking down Perses and the hub supporting brutal wars across the Middle East. Katya and Paul recruit U.S. government allies and plot strategy, but Perses and his network of arms dealers, money launderers, smugglers, and spies seem to be always one step ahead of them. Justice blurs with revenge as Paul's ragtag group has one last chance to stop Perses and save lives—but the gamble comes at a high price. The novel globe-trots from California's deserts to Paris' posh avenues to Malta's ancient streets, with the action tense and urgent throughout. Employing taut, clean prose and a tightly woven plot, Strange tells a story worthy of the big screen, showing a grasp of global geopolitics as well as fighting tactics, weaponry, and the intelligence world. Highly recommended for fans of James Bond and *Mission Impossible*.



Branding Democrats: A Top-to-Bottom Reimagining of Campaign Strategies.

By Ken Weber and Daryl Weber.

2022. 200p. RealClear, $24.95 (9781637554715). 324.7.

Democrats won the White House and a congressional majority in 2020, yet President Biden's approval ratings remain low, and pundits question the party's chances in the 2024 election. Why the gloom when Democrats are the majority party? The reason, claims this father-son author team, is poor branding. Republicans excel at having a unified, simple message they hammer home, the authors note. By contrast, Democrats' national message is murky. The Webers emphasize that Democrats need to create a brand that relates to everyday concerns: they suggest "Democrats Fight for the People." They also urge Democrats to define their opposition rather than letting their opposition define them, and to learn from Trump's 2016 success with adherence to his brand and easy-to-understand messaging. The drawback to the authors clear, simple, persuasive prose is it can oversimplify political discourse. The Democrats' appeal is in speaking to the world's complexity. The Webers' suggestions could result in the party abandoning its diversity of views, a key strength. Nonetheless, the authors make excellent points, and candidates, campaign staff, and other interested Democrats should find their recommendations valuable.

Earning It.

By E. F. Dodd.

2022. 332p. Sugar Beaver, paper, $14.95 (9798986288000).

In Dodd's romance novel, PR executive Regan "Rae" Murphy is at her best friend Kesler's wedding when she discovers that the ex who broke her heart and made her swear off men is the best man. When Rae and Donovan "Van" McLeod were a couple, Rae knew Van as Ray Edwards—before she discovered he lied about his identity as an undercover FBI agent. He used her as bait to capture her boss, whose PR business was a front for illegal activities. Feeling betrayed, Rae fled her hometown of Charlotte for Charleston to start life anew. Now the newlyweds have invited their friends, including Rae and Van, to join them on their honeymoon following the wedding. Van plans to use the week to win Rae back. Can he outlive the ghosts of their relationship's past? Readers will find it easy to root for Dodd's well-drawn, likable characters and will appreciate the humor throughout. The story is topped off with steamy scenes that will leave their hearts racing, too.

Muir's Gambit.

By Michael Frost Beckner.

2022. 404p. Montrose Station, $28 (9798985597400).

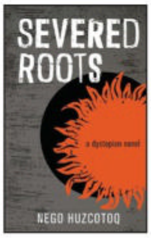
Beckner, screenwriter of the movie *Spy Game*, returns to the murky world of Cold War espionage and the characters he introduced in the Tony Scott film starring Robert Redford and Brad Pitt. This story starts in the ’90s with the assassination of a CIA legend who, with his dying breath, seemingly implicates CIA spymaster Nathan Muir in his murder. Seeing an opportunity to rid the agency of Muir and the secrets and lies the old-school intelligence officer is privy to, the CIA deputy director enlists Muir’s former protégé, Russell Aiken, to prise a confession from him. Embittered CIA lawyer Aiken, harboring a grudge against Muir, sets about bringing the spymaster down. Unlike spy thrillers that glamorize espionage with big action scenes and gadgetry, this is a scathing condemnation of tradecraft and its moral and psychological costs. Russell Aiken, the novel’s sardonic, bleakly funny, alcoholic narrator, is worlds away from James Bond. Muir, meanwhile, is a scenery-munching Machiavelli whose manipulative philosophizing and affinity for intrigue recall John le Carré’s George Smiley. A brilliant, satisfyingly offbeat opening salvo to a planned trilogy.

Severed Roots.

By Nego Huzcotoq.

2022. 306p. Paper Spider, paper, $16 (9781738678105).

Huzcotoq’s intriguing dystopian novel presents a futuristic society where women intend to prevent men from destroying the world. Principles of The New World Order decree that a peaceful world will arise when women eclipse the darkness of ignorance and brutality caused by the male gender, aka “mankeys.” The concept of family, considered a patriarchal construct, has been outlawed; children are birthed by women “manufacturers” and raised in a central location, and male adolescents either receive mandatory chemical injections to eliminate their sexual urges or undergo gender reassignment surgery. However, not all go along easily. This is a domain of rallies, revolt, and self-immolation by women who yearn for a chance at motherhood. In the clandestine “Island House,” women procreate with men who haven’t gotten injections. Protagonist Nick strives to get to Island House, inviting along his troubled friend Beatrice, who longs to be a mother. As the story unfolds, Huzcotoq reveals a surprise about Nick’s family roots. The author builds a believable world and considers its wide-ranging consequences, providing a profoundly absorbing, thought-provoking tale sure to satisfy fans of the genre.



To Venus and Back: One Man’s Quest to Rediscover Love.

By Turner Grant.

2022. 374p. Stones River, paper, $17.95 (9798218004248). 818.

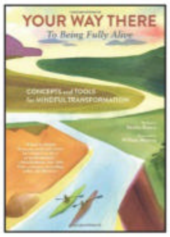
When Grant, a Harvard-educated, well-travelled architect who once ran for Congress, was widowed at 51 with two sons, he felt adrift. This memoir recounts how he began testing the dating waters and, over three years, met scores of women, from a divorcée he encounters at a gala to a dating setup covered by the *Washington Post* to connections made from online dating services. Turner’s architect’s eye for detail clearly draws him to smart, attractive women with an array of personalities, including a tight-lipped analyst searching for a father for her son, a woman in banking who claims to see ghosts, and a school administrator planning sex parties at her home. Grant includes colorful details of each get-together, including trips abroad. Written after the dating merry-go-round, the final chapters offer interesting insights into Grant’s experiences, such as this Loretta Young quote: “Love isn’t something you find; it’s something that finds you.” As with the popular ’90s relationship guide this book’s title alludes to, Grant’s entertaining story should appeal to anyone searching for romance and, ultimately, love.

Your Way There (To Being Fully Alive): Concepts and Tools for Mindful Transformation.

By Gretta Keene.

2023. 240p. illus. Wise Ink, $28.95 (9781634895057). 158.

Drawing from her work as a clinical psychotherapist and personal life as a daughter, wife, and mother, Keene provides valuable tools to construct an authentic, fulfilling life, asking profound questions to help readers find ways out of devastating circumstances: “How do we connect with our inner experience? . . . With whom do we feel those strong emotional connections we call love? What is it about those connections that leaves us feeling fully alive—or not so much?” She skillfully explains how we were all shaped by our earliest caretakers and presents the “Full Spectrum,” a pie chart of emotions that, when seen in its entirety, allows for negative feelings to be acknowledged and healed by more positive ones. The goal is to live life “As-Is” rather than as it “Should-Be.” Keene creatively and concisely presents her concepts and tools with the help of her husband, William Murray’s, whimsical watercolor-and-ink illustrations. Sidebars in playful calligraphy reinforce the salient points. A 38-page toolbox at the book’s end summarizes each chapter’s information succinctly. Anyone hoping for a gratifying life of less turmoil and more resilience will find a firm, kind guide here.



Youth

Just City.

By Olga Tymofiyeva.

2022. 175p. Olga Tymofiyeva, paper, $7.38 (9798365536807).

This engaging, philosophically oriented YA novel follows Nathan, a budding young entrepreneur, as he works to earn money to enter a start-up contest. As part of this, he joins a virtual reality game, *Just City,* created by his grandmother, a neuroscience and experimental philosophy professor. In the game, players determine the rules of a virtual society, such as the boundaries of criminal justice and health care, being plunged into randomly selected characters from different walks of society. Nathan begins the game believing that the downtrodden simply don’t have the “will” to succeed. But as he plays the character of a poor young man accused of a terrible crime in the game, he realizes people can be trapped through no fault of their own. The novel, narrated by Nathan, does a wonderful job showing the thoughts and feelings of a privileged young man reexamining his views. The story’s language is easy to understand, with concepts like brain development explained through dialogue, and the novel flows quickly. Both the intended YA audience and older adults will find this an exciting and moving read.

OLGA TYMOFIYEVA
JUST CITY

Pebbles and the Biggest Number.

By Joey Benun. Illus. by Laura Watson.

2023. 48p. The Biggest Number, $17.99 (9781737818601).

Pebbles is a butterfly who enjoys counting the flowers in his garden and wonders what other numbers might be out there. He embarks on a journey to talk to different animals about the biggest numbers they know, including a camel in the desert who tells him the sun’s core is 27,000,000 degrees Fahrenheit and an eagle who talks about the septillion stars in the sky. Other facts are sprinkled throughout, such as how deep dolphins can dive and how much rain falls in rain forests. These facts are presented through thoughtful layouts with interesting asides, such as “Did you know?” callouts. Watson’s illustrations are playful and colorful, expertly capturing the drama of a swooping parrot and the beauty of a nighttime flight over mountaintops. Pebbles is a fun, friendly narrator astounded by all he learns. At 48 pages, *Pebbles* is a lot to digest in one sitting. Many readers—children as well as adults—will prefer to break it up across multiple readings. The simplicity of the concept and the enchanting illustrations make this an appealing possibility.

Continued from p.37

Valeria, but Luna is nervous about how to go all the way. Nonbinary Romy is the most experienced in queer relationships and supports Luna's coming out even as she hides her own feelings for her best friend. Some readers will find the protagonists' self-aware discussions of the mechanics of LGBTQ love-making empowering, while others may find that it takes the sizzle out of this friends-to-lovers romance. —*Kristina Giovanni*

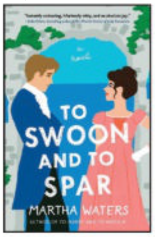
YA: *Older YAs needing a boost of confidence will enjoy Luna's tale. KG.*

To Swoon and to Spar.

By Martha Waters.

Apr. 2023. 336p. Atria, paper, $17.99 (9781668007907); e-book (9781668007914).

Peter Bourne, Viscount Penvale, finally has a chance to buy back his family's country home, Trethwick Abbey, from his uncle John. There is just one problem. In order for John to sell Trethwick Abbey to Penvale, he insists that Penvale wed his ward Jane Spencer. While Jane would like nothing better than to rid herself of the annoying, intrusive presence of her guardian, she isn't exactly sure that trading him in for Penvale is a step in the right direction. Fortunately for Jane, she has a plan to ensure that her new husband leaves her alone at Trethwick Abbey: convince him that it is haunted. With a refreshingly acerbic sense of wit Jane Austen might have admired as well as a plot that gives a clever nod to the screwball spooky delights of Austen's Gothic-tinged *Northanger Abbey* and the novels of Mrs. Radcliffe, Waters (*To Marry and to Meddle*, 2022) proves she is in fine literary fettle as she dexterously delivers another sublimely satisfying addition to her completely charming Regency Vows series. —*John Charles*



Under Fire.

By Lynn H. Blackburn.

Mar. 2023. 352p. Revell, paper, $16.99 (9780800737979); e-book (9781493439676).

After years of hiding her alcoholism, U.S. Secret Service agent Tessa Reed is finally on the road to sobriety. But the memory of losing fellow agent Zane Thacker's love and trust while at her lowest reminds her that the stakes for preserving their friendship are higher than ever. When the exes-turned-friends reunite on a presidential protective detail assignment in Raleigh, the team receives a threat against the one person Zane cannot bear to lose, Tessa. As the situation turns deadly, Zane and Tessa's complicated chemistry reignites, and the pair must reconcile past demons in order to rediscover a future together. Blackburn again unites suspense with inspirational romance in the third installment of her Defend and Protect series, following *Malicious Intent* (2022). *Under Fire* features adults who use faith to navigate their pain, desires, and flaws amid the dangerous work and intimate camaraderie of a Secret Service team. Their resistance to vulnerability intensifies their experience with personal brokenness as related to alcoholism and past trauma, creating a fresh depth of character-building that wonderfully complements Blackburn's well-loved plot twists. —*Kate Campos*

SF/Fantasy & Horror

The Blood Gift.

By N. E. Davenport.

Apr. 2023. 448p. Harper Voyager, $32 (9780063058538); e-book (9780063058552).

At the beginning of the second part of Davenport's action-packed duology (after *The Blood Trials*, 2022), Ikenna and her team of rogue warriors have their backs against the wall, desperately seeking allies and supplies to wage war against an emperor with god-like strength. Thankfully Ikenna is learning to embrace her forbidden power, the ability to manipulate her blood into weapons and shields. Unfortunately, this skill will require calling on gods Ikenna doesn't believe in. As she and her squad face insurmountable odds and shifting alliances, the body count continues to grow. Will Ikenna be able to win against her enemies? Will she be able to open up to her boyfriend and the squad that supports her? The battles are exciting, but Ikenna's strength comes from her rich inner dialogue. Her struggles to communicate make her relatable despite her frightening skills, and readers will keep turning the pages to see what she says next. Fans of Pierce Brown's Red Rising series as well as *War Girls*, by Tochi Onyebuchi (2019), will enjoy reading the conclusion to Ikenna's story. —*Ashley Rayner*

YA: *Teens who can handle sex and violence will enjoy the conclusion to Ikenna's story. AR.*

The Cleaving.

By Juliet E. McKenna.

Apr. 2023. 400p. Angry Robot, paper, $17.99 (9781915202222); e-book (9781915202277).

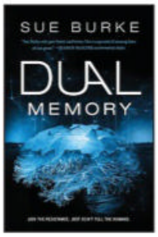
There are many retellings of King Arthur and the knights of Camelot. The women are there too but are frequently sidekicks without their own stories. McKenna, expert on medieval history and warfare, has given Ygraine, Nimue, Morgana, and Guinevere voices they previously lacked, as they are forced to watch as decisions that impact their lives are taken out of their hands. Nimue, initially an undercover maidservant to Queen Ygraine, has kept her magical abilities under wraps to all except Merlin, with whom she is constantly at odds. The story follows her service to the queen, and it is hard not to sympathize with the number of times she must bite her tongue against injustice and things she does not want to let go for the sake of alliances. The friendships the women strike up help see them through everything, and their steadfast loyalty towards one other makes their less-than-ideal circumstances easier to wade through. McKenna's writing immediately makes readers identify with the characters, and the strength they draw together fights against the weight of helplessness. —*Carrie Rasak*

Dual Memory.

By Sue Burke.

May 2023. 352p. Tor, $29.99 (9781250809131); e-book (9781250809155).

Though the scale of Burke's latest (after *Immunity Index*, 2021) is limited to the small island of Thule in the Arctic Circle, the conflict faced by the islanders takes on a large-scale feel. Antonio Moro is injured while firing missiles at war boats of the Leviathan League, recruited by mercenaries to be on the lookout for LL agents, and hired to create art for the chamber of commerce. He takes possession of the control cube of Par Augustus, an AI that has become independent, as a reward for his contest-winning sculpture. Because Moro is always polite to the various machine systems he encounters, Par Augustus introduces itself to him. Gradually this leads to befriending Chatelaine, the system that runs his employers' home, and Prior Edifice, which runs the hospital. When the raiders threaten again, the merchants, who do a lot of trading of ExtraTs stored at the Xenological Gardens, and the Thules, pacifistic doctors who are the main government of the isle, differ on how to deal with them. Par Augustus has other ideas too, and Moro becomes his willing human accomplice. If Ursula Le Guin had written about AI machines, it would have looked a lot like this marvelous fable. —*Don Vicha*

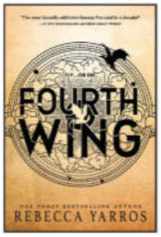


Fourth Wing.

By Rebecca Yarros.

May 2023. 512p. Entangled/Red Tower, $29.99 (9781649374042); e-book (9781649374080).

Basgiath War College trains healers, scribes, infantry, or dragon riders to protect Navarre from violent invasion attempts from the kingdom of Poromiel and their gryphon riders. Violet has trained her whole life to enter the Scribe Quadrant, just like her father did. Dedicating her life to recording the war history of Navarre, rather than participating in it, fits well with her intelligence, short stature, and overly flexible joints, which leave her prone to injury. But upon her father's death, her mother, a decorated Navarrian officer, forces Violet to follow in her footsteps, and that of Violet's siblings, and join the Riders Quadrant. Once bonded, riders channel powers through their dragons, greatly increasing the likelihood of success both in the college and at war. If that wasn't challenging enough, Violet is being hunted by Xaden, a third-year cadet whose



father was a rebellion leader executed at the hand of Violet's mother. Hatred will draw him close to her, but will something more powerful and alluring make separating impossible? Suspenseful, sexy, and with incredibly entertaining storytelling, the first in Yarros' Empyrean series will delight fans of romantic, adventure-filled fantasy. —*Sal A. Joyce*

> **YA:** *Though there is on-the-page sex, teen readers of Sarah J. Maas and Leigh Bardugo will flock to this one. SAJ.*

In the Lives of Puppets.

By TJ Klune.

Apr. 2023. 432p. Tor, $28.99 (9781250217448); e-book (9781250217424).

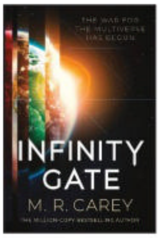
In a tale that riffs on the beats of *Pinocchio* with a futuristic bent, Klune (*The House in the Cerulean Sea*, 2020) tells the story of a boy named Victor, who finds a broken android and sets off a series of events leading to terrible truth about the world he lives in, a dangerous journey, and characters both charming and threatening. Victor is human, but his family—his father, Giovanni, an inventor; an old medical robot, Nurse Ratched; and a vacuum named Rambo—are robots. Gio's terrible secrets are well hidden, until Victor accidentally sets off an alarm in the process of unearthing a mostly complete android called Hap. In one fell swoop, everything Victor thought he knew is turned upside down, and Gio is taken prisoner by strange, faceless beings in a flying whale. The journey to the City of Electric Dreams, where Gio's original lab is, will be difficult, and Victor will have to contend with how new knowledge of the past may change his relationship with his family. Like Klune's prior work, themes of found family and the hard work of hope prevail. —*Regina Schroeder*

> **YA:** *Lots of young adult soul-searching will attract teen readers. RS.*

★ Infinity Gate.

By M. R. Carey.

Apr. 2023. 496p. Orbit, paper, $18.99 (9780316504386); e-book (9780316504560).



Carey launches the Pandominion series with a tale told by a seemingly omniscient narrator working up to the moment it achieved sentience during the interdimensional war between the Pandominion empire and the machine hegemony, or Ansurrection. The narrative follows three primary characters: Hadiz Tambuwal, a human scientist on a dying world who accidentally develops interdimensional travel; Essien Nkanika, a human rogue who enlists in the Pandominion military, the Cielo, after being wrenched into one of their worlds; and Topaz Tourmaline FiveHills, a recklessly independent rabbit from a Pandominion world. The Pandominion consider any sentient beings outside of the worlds they govern to be inferior and therefore expendable, which leads the military to shoot Hadiz and capture Essien when they notice Hadiz's scientific excursions into some of their worlds. Topaz is an ordinary student until she befriends an Ansurrection sleeper agent and is forced to flee her homeworld to unite with Hadiz. *Infinity Gate*, with its in-depth science and rich characterization, is a must-read for sf fans, as Carey's story crosses the militarism of an anthropomorphic *Starship Troopers* with Terry Pratchett and Stephen Baxter's Long Earth series while waging a war against *Stargate's* replicators. —*Frances Moritz*

The Marigold.

By Andrew F. Sullivan.

Apr. 2023. 360p. ECW, paper, $21.95 (9781770416642).

Climate change has ravaged the landscape, sparing nothing, including the city of Toronto, which appears to be eating itself. Sinkholes open up out of nowhere, and people turn up dead, subsumed by "the Wet," colloquially named toxic mold that is all consuming. The Marigold stands as a luxury condo tower in the heart of the city, but the building has numerous issues: cabinets falling apart and strange smells permeating the air. Cathy Jin and her partner, Jasmine, work for the city investigating new reports of the Wet, while Soda Dalipagic barely gets by as a rideshare driver before he stumbles upon information that could change everything. Henrietta Brakes lives a largely unsupervised life with her friends, and a tragic event leads her to dive deep into the city's bowels. Interspersed throughout are quick glimpses into the Marigold's residents' lives, bringing an eerie sense of doom as the novel marches on. Readers are forced to watch as plans for a new tower, Marigold II, finally bring the human cost of development home to roost. The ecohorror angle provides something different for horror fans and climate activists alike. —*Carrie Rasak*

The Merry Dredgers.

By Jeremy C. Shipp.

Apr. 2023. 200p. Meerkat, paper, $16.95 (9781946154460).

Seraphina, a struggling actress whose main gig is portraying a princess at birthday parties, comes home exhausted to find a series of postcards from her sister, Eff, who has joined a cult, the Merry Dredgers. Within days of making contact, Phina learns that Eff was in an accident and now lies in a coma. In order to find Eff's attacker, Phina decides to infiltrate the cult. Setting the unease high from page one, Shipp (*The Bedfellow*, 2018) draws readers in immediately with Phina's conversational narration, quickly introducing a compelling mystery. However, it is with the introduction of the cult's home base, an abandoned amusement park, and the creepy details of the place and its history that readers will eagerly settle in for the duration and be rewarded. The story evolves from the thriller it appears to be and emerges as a thought-provoking tale about love, vulnerability, and the stories we tell about ourselves. A suspenseful and creepy read for fans of horror featuring cults, such as *Just like a Mother* (2022), by Anne Heltzel, or amusement parks, like *Hide* (2022), by Kiersten White. —*Becky Spratford*

Spring's Arcana.

By Lilith Saintcrow.

May 2023. 368p. Tor, paper, $17.99 (9781250791658); e-book (9781250791665).

When Nat Drozdova finds herself in the lobby of a Manhattan high-rise, she thinks she is fulfilling her dying mother's final wish. She fingers the business card her mother thrust into her hand and turns it over. The words "let her in" are scrawled on the back. When she holds up the card, she is whisked into a world her mother has hidden from her. A world where the Baba Yaga runs her criminal syndicate in that very high-rise, where cats talk and invisible seamstresses make gorgeous gowns, and where blood taken without consent feeds, and violent ritual sacrifices bring forth new magical beings. The fantastical—all living behind the thin veil of Nat's reality. That afternoon, when Nat promises to do Baba's bidding in exchange for saving her mother's life, she has no idea of the extent of her mother's lies, or whether the dangerous path forward will lead her to power beyond her wildest imagination or to her own demise. For readers who love the retelling of dark fairy tales, Saintcrow's series starter is a thrilling ride that will not disappoint. —*Sal A. Joyce*

> **YA:** *With a protagonist in her early twenties and a hint of romance, this may appeal to older teen readers. SAJ.*

The Way of the Cicadas.

By Audrey Henley.

Apr. 2023. 350p. Monodon, paper, $15.99 (9798986187907); e-book (9798986187914).

Fans of *The 100* and other young adult dystopias will enjoy Henley's debut about a group of teens who decide to bust out of the bunker they've been trapped in for a decade after nuclear war decimated the U.S. The administration insists that it isn't safe to emerge from underground despite evidence to the contrary and the dwindling water and air supply in the bunker. Once a girl named Brita is taken in and seems healthy, Hayden and his fellow teens decide it's time to take matters into their own hands and go get supplies to keep their bunker going. But the outside world holds more dangers than they were prepared to face. While there are minor notes of queerness in the book, these lose focus next to the love triangle between Hayden and two girls, which feels like a missed opportunity. The novel can be a little simplistic, particularly when it comes to some dubious radiation science, but the characters are compelling, particularly Hayden and bold, angry Selah, and readers will want to pick up a sequel to learn more about the fate of this cast. —*Leah von Essen*

> **YA:** *Young adult readers will enjoy the teenage protagonists and character-driven storylines. LvE.*

Graphic Novels

Adult

Black & White: The Rise and Fall of Bobby Fischer.

By Julian Voloj. Art by Wagner Willian.

Apr. 2023. 176p. Abrams ComicArts, $24.99 (9781419759864). 741.5.

Reading *Black & White*, a graphic biography of chess grandmaster Bobby Fischer, one can't help but think a little about Icarus and the risks of a meteoric rise. Readers learn that Fischer was a relatively solitary child growing up impoverished in Brooklyn—that is, until chess entered his life. With genius aptitude for the game, he catches the attention of the wealthy, social-club like chess world, rising through the ranks even before he should be admitted (children are typically unwelcome). As his star rises, however, so descends Fischer's interest in anything other than chess, and his insistence that he be able to make a living with the game alone exposes a rashness and ego that create lifelong problems. His fall took decades, slowly descending into paranoia and anti-Semitic conspiracies (despite being Jewish himself) and an untimely death as a fugitive. Making brilliant use of the medium, Voloj and Willian play with the similarities of comics panels and the chessboard to move the pieces of Fischer's life into and out of view across time. Sure to fascinate chess and popular culture fans alike. *—Matthew Noe*

Fart School.

By Mel Stringer. Art by the author.

Mar. 2023. 200p. Silver Sprocket, $24.99 (9798886200157). 741.5.

In *Fart School*, Mel leaves her small hometown of Darwin to get her art degree at a school in Brisbane. Though she wanted to complete a degree in animation, she had to enroll in visual arts. She posts her work on Deviant Art, creates zines that she sells around town, and posts her stickers wherever she can. Her family helps her move into bare-bones student housing, and she meets various other students in her program as well. Mel starts her visual-arts course and quickly must deal with figuring out her artistic vision and how to function independently from her family. Even though Mel was extremely excited to start art school and pursue her passions, the school's campus is literally crumbling around her, and her classes are demanding in a way she didn't expect. Stringer's work is colorful and engaging, especially when she switches the perspective to follow the landscape through other eyes to display the city and the campus. The book is a relatable exploration of the difficulties of making it in the art world. *—Julia Rittenberg*

I Escaped a Chinese Internment Camp.

By Anthony Del Col. Art by Fahmida Azim and Rebecca Good.

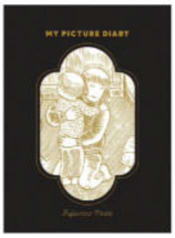
Apr. 2023. 88p. Diamond/New Friday, paper, $19.99 (9781988247960). 741.5.

Through interviews and her United Nations Human Rights Council testimony, Zumrat Dawut tells her story of the events leading up to her incarceration in a Chinese prison in Ürümqi, the capital of China's Xinjiang region. Dawut and other Uyghurs from the region were being monitored by the government and punished for being Muslim. Dawut details the horrific treatment she and the other detainees received in prison, including beatings, sterilizations, and four to five hours of daily anti-Muslim/pro-Chinese nationalist rants. Readers will be haunted by the lack of humanity on the part of the Chinese government and sympathize with Dawut's circumstances as a woman and mother of three children. The illustrations are mainly grayscale, with red accents when the Chinese government is present and blue accents when Dawut is free; when Dawut's family escapes China and steps off the plane in the U.S., the illustrations become full color. This is a short but powerful story initially published by the online newspaper *Insider*, where it won the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for Illustrated Reporting and Commentary. For another compelling immigrant story, recommend Jake Halpern's *Welcome to the New World* (2020). *—Suzanne Temple*

★ My Picture Diary.

By Fujiwara Maki. Art by the author. Tr. by Ryan Holmberg.

Apr. 2023. 284p. Drawn & Quarterly, $29.95 (9781770466623). 741.5.



To read this graphic work without context provides universally empathetic glimpses of a wife and mother increasingly overwhelmed by home life, suffocating under sexist expectations. Her four-year-old son is growing up, she's exhausted by endless household chores, and she argues often with her lackadaisical, withdrawn husband, who eventually admits to needing professional help. The work is presented in two-page spreads: on the right, a deftly detailed, emotionally revealing black-and-white ink drawing; on the left, the weather with a succinct description of the day's highlights. Entries begin on January 4, 1981, with regular, near-daily additions through the end of April, and then skip ahead to just four dates in May, July, November, and December, as if everyday duties left no room for creative expression. Fujiwara unapologetically notes in her afterword to the original 1982 Japanese edition, "I realize I didn't say a single cool thing about [her husband], showing only his bad side." For manga aficionados seeking deeper engagement, translator Holmberg, a powerhouse comics historian and professor, appends a not-to-be-missed illuminating essay reclaiming Fujiwara's artistic autonomy—as a renowned underground actor as well as author-artist—despite being too long eclipsed by famous husband Tsuge Yoshiharu, considered the inventor of literary manga. Holmberg, who has also translated all of Tsuge's titles available in English thus far, rightfully ensures Fujiwara gets a book of her own. *—Terry Hong*

Young Adult

★ Codex Black, v.1: A Fire among Clouds.

By Camilo Moncada Lozano. Art by Camilo Moncada Lozano and Angel De Santiago.

Apr. 2023. 320p. IDW, paper, $16.99 (9781684059591). Gr. 7–12. 741.5.

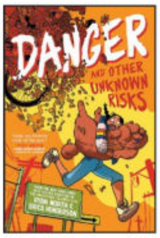
Zapotec teen Donaji departs her village on a quest to find her long-lost father. Brimming with confidence, she loses her way, stumbling upon Itzcacalotl, a Mexica boy separated from his own party of warriors, members of the enemy Triple Alliance. Despite differing allegiances, they band together on Donaji's quest, pitting her fearlessness, her god-inhabited poncho, and his burgeoning crow-themed superpowers against the supercompetent thief Citlalmina, as well as various supernatural creatures, including the ghastly, terrifying Yohualtepuztli, the Night Axe. As this summary attests, here is a historical epic that fully immerses readers in Mesoamerican culture, religion, politics, language, and aesthetics. However, a visual language that is pure manga, vibrant colors, and burnished lighting combine to make it feel absolutely immediate and tonally modern. Indeed, the fully fleshed-out cultures soar to heights of such marvelous fancy, the setting could easily be taken for wholly invented high fantasy, making this a great way to sneak some history to your fantasy-minded readers. The characters and emotions, though, are highly relatable, the climax turning not on battle but on Donaji's ability to confront her own shortcomings. Both a thrilling epic and a setup for forthcoming volumes—not to mention a rollicking action-adventure featuring well-crafted characters—this gets the highest recommendation, right down to its very helpful back matter, addressing language, beliefs, and historical context. *—Jesse Karp*

★ Danger and Other Unknown Risks.

By Ryan North and Erica Henderson. Art by Erica Henderson.

Apr. 2023. 208p. Penguin Workshop, $24.99 (9780593224823); paper, $16.99 (9780593224847). Gr. 7–12. 741.5.

A kid and their dog going on an adventure may be one of the most classic setups for stories aimed at young people, yet, in the hands of author North and artist Henderson, this frequently seen premise is the invitation to explore an exciting new world; one Marguerite is determined to save. She and talking dog Daisy have trained their whole lives to find and bring back the items Uncle Bernard needs to cast a world-stabilizing spell. Because in this world, 1999 *did* see a world end with catastrophe, but it wasn't Y2K; it was the return of magic that rendered electricity and everything that depended on it dead. Now Marguerite and Daisy have to cope with magic changing by region, muggers who can teleport wolves as backup, and the nagging sense that their mission isn't as straightforward as assumed. North and Henderson are a delightful team with this work, which shares many qualities with their run on *The Unbeatable Squirrel Girl*. Marguerite and Daisy are both determined, spunky heroes who want to help others in big and small ways. Fans of *Adventure Time* will love the alternate-universe backstory as well as the various uses of Marguerite's one spell. —*Sarah Rice*

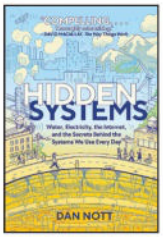


Hidden Systems: Water, Electricity, the Internet, and the Secrets behind the Systems We Use Every Day.

By Dan Nott. Art by the author.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Random/RH Graphic, $23.99 (9780593125366); paper, $17.99 (9781984896049). Gr. 7–12. 741.5.

Ever walked through the city and wondered what lay beneath your feet? Of course you have! But most of us quickly put it out of mind and move on. *Hidden Systems* is what happens when that wondering doesn't go away and the answers come to you in the form of a comic. While there are dozens of hidden systems that keep modernity operating, Nott chooses to focus on three that, arguably, set the foundation for all the rest: the internet, the power grid (electricity), and waterworks. The book is split into sections for each system, with each section providing a history of how these systems emerged, where they are today, and views at different scales—macro, micro, and in daily life. The future of these systems is briefly considered, with a note of hope for adaptation in a world of climate change, largely in the concluding chapter. The true power of comics is on display here, with complex, difficult-to-comprehend structures presented both through a variety of metaphors *and* by placing those metaphors in context with simplified renditions of their real physical appearance. As he credits in the end pages (with process sketches and a bibliography), Nott is channeling the brilliant illustrative work of David Macaulay's *The Way Things Work* here, bringing clarity to a new generation of curious readers. Strong crossover YA and adult appeal. —*Matthew Noe*



Hungry Ghost.

By Victoria Ying. Art by the author.

Apr. 2023. 208p. First Second, paper, $17.99 (9781250767004). Gr. 9–12. 741.5.

For all of Valerie's life, food has been a source of stress and difficulty. Valerie internalized her mother's gaze and stays thin through an eating disorder. She scrolls through the internet and compares her body to other women's, telling herself that she must remain thin and that no one who is fat could be happy (including her friend Jordan). On a school trip to Paris, Val can barely handle the idea of eating heavy food. However, after her father's death, Val realizes how stuck she is in her own body. Though her grief allows her to start eating without as much shame, Val is still cruel to Jordan about her appearance. When she realizes how awful she's been acting toward herself and her loved ones, she learns to open up about her eating disorder and ask for help. Ying's soft artwork, colored in pastel pinks and blues, nicely evokes Val's emotional journey through facial expressions and body language. A thoughtful author's note offers additional resources for readers struggling with internalized fatphobia or disordered eating. —*Julia Rittenberg*

Insomniacs after School, v.1.

By Makoto Ojiro. Art by the author.

Mar. 2023. 192p. VIZ Media, paper, $12.99 (9781974736577). Gr. 7–11. 741.5.

This slice-of-life manga about two teenagers with insomnia is a slow and tender story about building trust. Magaki and Nakami bond over finding a place to rest in their school's abandoned observatory. Alongside their steady, soft romance, there's a wholesome gentleness that is conveyed by the art and the story. The characters struggle with personal insecurities and the ill effects of lack of sleep but also support each other in those struggles. At the end of the first volume, Magaki and Nakami are set to bring back the astronomy club, but the slow-burn nature of this manga means that there is probably much more to come. Mentions of Magaki's history with health issues and some light foreshadowing from things she says while talking to Nakami give the text a melancholy feeling. Perfect for those who loved Yoshitoki Oima's *A Silent Voice* series, Naoshi Arakawa's *Your Lie in April*, and Jun Mayuzuki's *After the Rain*. —*Ashley Hawkins*

Is Love the Answer?

By Uta Isaki. Art by the author.

2023. 256p. Kodansha, paper, $14.99 (9781646516490). Gr. 11–12. 741.5.

This is Isaki's exploration of the complexities of asexuality and aromanticism. When Chika is in high school, she tries dating, only to find that she really doesn't feel sexual desire or romantic impulses. After dating two boys with the hopes that her emotions will be sparked by being in a relationship, she is unable to feel anything with either of them, leading to both relationships ending. Feeling ostracized and comparing herself to an alien who doesn't understand human relationships, Chika enrolls in a psychology program at university. When a professor she admires introduces her to the idea of asexuality, Chika's world opens up. She makes friends, learns more about the complexities of asexual identity and how it configures into the LGBTQ+ community, and begins advocacy work. Isaki's work deftly balances informational content and Chika's emotional journey throughout this one-volume manga. The manga offers tremendous insight while also telling a compelling story with soft and evocative artwork. This is a valuable and affirming manga about acceptance of self and others. —*Ashley Hawkins*

Mulysses.

By Øyvind Torseter. Art by the author.

Tr. by Kari Dickson.

Apr. 2023. 156p. Enchanted Lion, $29.95 (9781592702763). Gr. 7–12. 741.5.

Mulysses is a down-on-his-luck sort of fellow. Laid off, evicted, and broke, he jumps at a chance to make some money assisting a wealthy collector on a sea voyage in search of the largest eye in the world. Drawing on elements of *Moby Dick* and Odysseus' adventure with the cyclops Polyphemos, Torseter's surreal comic takes readers on an off-kilter yet charming journey. Generous and kind Mulysses helps plenty of creatures along the way, and those acts of kindness reap timely rewards, in a fable-like turn. Fine-lined ink drawings coupled with dusky, impressionistic washes create moments of quiet atmosphere, and elsewhere, jumbled scenes of objects and odd creatures collaged together contribute to the strangeness of the story. When Mulysses discovers a stowaway (the tavern waitress) and the collector abandons them in a storm, the mission shifts subtly, and questions about the ethics of collecting artifacts bubble below the surface. It's an idiosyncratic work that might not gain a huge audience, but art-loving tween and teen readers (perhaps even adults) who like old-fashioned, whimsical, folkloric stories might be entranced. —*Sarah Hunter*

Oshi No Ko, v.1.

By Aka Akasaka. Art by Mengo Yokoyari.

2023. 228p. Yen, paper, $13 (9781975363178). Gr. 9–12. 741.5.

This whirlwind regeneration story begins with fans of an idol being reborn as her children, but it takes readers through many plot twists in what Akasaka describes as the prologue to the main story. Ai is a 16-year-old idol (a popular, wholesome pop-music singer) who finds herself pregnant with twins. The truth would ruin her reputation, so she births them in secret and juggles a double life as an idol and a parent. Her twin children remember their past lives, but they only use their advanced language and reasoning skills in moments of self-interest. Akasaka blends several popular manga tropes here but keeps them fresh. Firstly, the reincarnation story supplants the reborn into our world, rather than starting them over in another world. Akasaka also peppers the narrative with comedy and light-

hearted shojo elements, but at heart, this story is dark and occasionally tragic. Akasaka breaks every chapter with a documentary-style interview set in the future, and these tantalizing little peeks hint at bigger things to come. This first volume spans the first several years of the children's lives and sets up a tonally very different main story. These twists and turns are sure to keep readers glued to this story. Yokoyari's dazzling, vivid illustrations deftly use breakaway panels and varying layouts to build tension and emphasize key moments. This series promises to be full of heartbreak and intrigue that will hook readers for years to come. —*Sara Smith*

Middle

Cosmic Cadets: Contact!

By Ben Crane. Art by Mimi Alves and Priscilla Tramontano.

Apr. 2023. 160p. Top Shelf, paper, $14.99 (9781603095204). Gr. 4–7. 741.5.

In a happy accident, Jimmil and his space-cadet friends have just stumbled across an undiscovered alien race that communicates through feelings. But Jimmil's mother, the captain of the *ESS Khonsu* and their expedition, worries that the aliens are dangerous, which creates a big misunderstanding between the adults and these empathic creatures. Can Jimmil and his friends solve the situation calmly and show the officers a new perspective? The kids-versus-adults conflict that plays out through most this graphic novel feels very reminiscent of '80s movies, complete with long monologues and tests of bravery, but the formula definitely works well given the material. Alves' bold artwork does a great job with character design and the alien environments, and it truly shines during moments that characters experience intense fear. Blurred colorization and elongated comic gutters expertly capture the intensity of the situation and the anxiety of the characters. A stellar choice for middle-grade comics fans, especially those who love sf set in space. —*Peter Blenski*

Juniper Mae: Knight of Tykotech City.

By Sarah Soh and Tim Fraser. Art by Sarah Soh.

Mar. 2023. 64p. Flying Eye, paper, $12.99 (9781912497454). Gr. 2–5. 741.5.

Juniper Mae is an extremely talented young inventor living in the town of Tykotech. She spends her time tinkering with gadgets and daydreaming of the legendary Guardian Knights of lore, which once protected the town and the creatures in its surrounding forest from the many vicious monsters lurking in the shadows. Soh's cozy illustrations colored in warm tones do a wonderful job of immersing readers into the fantastical world of the story, in which a mystical power source for Tykotech goes on the fritz and the city's scientists don't know why. Juniper ventures out on her own and meets the friendly, frog-like tama-tama people—and, perhaps, the source of the problem. Can she make the right choice when presented with an alluring promise? Tykotech is a vibrantly detailed world populated by big-eyed, manga-inspired characters, which call to mind the animation style of *Steven Universe* or *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*. The ambitious story lays lots of groundwork, and a cliff-hanger ending ensures that readers will be eager to pick up the next volume. —*Jonathan Khan*

Meesh the Bad Demon.

By Michelle Lam. Art by Michelle Lam and Lauren "Perry" Wheeler.

Mar. 2023. 304p. Knopf, $21.99 (9780593372876); paper, $13.99 (9780593372869). Gr. 3–6. 741.5.

Meesh is a demon who fancies herself a fairy princess and would rather tend to flowers than attend fire-breathing and acid-puking classes at demon school. After a scuffle with some other kids at school, she discovers that her community's lava is poisoned and everyone is turning to stone. She decides to go to Plumeria, where the fairies live, to get help, and a mishap leaves her and the fairy princess stranded and out of reach. The demons and fairies have a long antagonistic history that puts this new alliance to the test, but once Meesh and new friend Nouna see the big picture, they realize everyone wins when they put their differences aside. This comic is beautifully illustrated with simple, cartoon drawings and pastel palettes, and it's as much about accepting other folks who are different as it is about loving and accepting oneself with all of one's strengths and weaknesses. The story has something for everyone: fairy princesses, unicorns, demons, werewolves, and high adventure with a cast of brave kids. —*Kristina Pino*

Polar Bear Café: Collector's Edition, v.1.

By Aloha Higa. Art by the author. Tr. by Michelle Tymon

2023. 210p. Seven Seas, paper, $16.99 (9781685793340). Gr. 4–8. 741.5.

A manga that inspired a beloved anime, *Polar Bear Café* is a comedy about a cast of animals living in modern-day Japan. Reliant on puns, visual gags, and absurdist situations, this manga is a hilarious reflection on daily life, with adorable illustrations. The central characters are Polar Bear, Panda, and Penguin. Polar Bear runs the eponymous café and is a lover of puns, which translator Tymon has integrated seamlessly. Panda is lazy, loves bamboo, and works part time at the zoo as a panda. Penguin is a regular customer who plays tsukkomi (the straight man) to Polar Bear or Panda's boke (funny man) in this manga's use of the Japanese manzai comedy format. This manga is cute and rather charmingly wholesome, although the jokes may go above the heads of very young readers. There is also an educational aspect, as the manga will often explain a bit about animal behavior or Japanese culture, in part to help the jokes land. Fans of the anime will be excited to see this manga featuring beloved characters finally in print. —*Ashley Hawkins*

Shazam! Thundercrack.

By Yehudi Mercado. Art by the author.

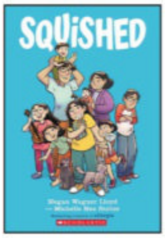
2023. 160p. DC Comics, paper, $9.99 (9781779505026). Gr. 3–7. 741.5.

Billy Batson grew up in the foster system, and his tough life experiences have caused him to focus solely on himself. That's only magnified when he is granted the magical powers of Shazam, and instead of saving people and doing good, he focuses on ways to advance his wants and needs. One day, Billy is caught attempting to skip school. Luckily, the school's football coach steps in and gives him the option of trying out for the team, rather than suffering through detention. The team really needs Billy's help, because their rivals have been a nightmare, injuring players on and off the field; they might even be up to something more sinister. Mercado has done an excellent job of both telling a story that takes place within the time line of the 2019 movie and offering an original story that neatly fits the world. Playful artwork, including plenty of clearly drawn action scenes, and a dynamic cast of side characters will make this appealing to middle-grade readers, even if they're not familiar with the movie. —*Jonathan Khan*

★ Squished.

By Megan Wagner Lloyd. Art by Michelle Mee Nutter.

Mar. 2023. 256p. Scholastic/Graphix, $24.99 (9781338568943); paper, $12.99 (9781338568936). Gr. 2–5. 741.5.



The best-selling creators of *Allergic* are back with an all-new story about handling change at a young age. Korean American Avery Lee lives in Hickory Valley, Maryland, and though she struggles with feelings caused from being squished in a house with her six other siblings, she loves her town. She shares a room with her sister Pearl and infant brother, Max, but she dreams of having her very own room away from all the noise and distractions, where she can be free to focus on her art. When she learns that her friend Cameron's family is building a bedroom in their basement, she's inspired to spend the summer before sixth grade raising money for a similar project at her own house. But change is on the horizon, and it might ruin her plans. Nutter's warm and appealing artwork comically captures the crowded chaos of the Lee household and the matter-of-fact diversity of the town, and the sun-dappled visuals will appeal to anyone who loves the work of Raina Telgemeier or Shannon Hale. Avery's ingenuity and determination are truly charming, and the message that, though change is scary and unavoidable, it often has its positives, is a great one for the target age group. This stirring and dynamic graphic novel is sure to win a lot of hearts. —*Jonathan Khan*

Youth Nonfiction

Older Readers

Michi Challenges History: From Farm Girl to Costume Designer to Relentless Seeker of the Truth—The Life of Michi Nishiura Weglyn.

By Ken Mochizuki.

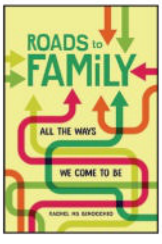
Mar. 2023. 160p. illus. Norton/Young Readers, $19.95 (9781324015888). Gr. 8–11. 973.0495.

Born in 1926 to immigrant parents, Michiko Nishiura grew up on the farm her parents operated in California. As Asian immigrants, they were not allowed to own land. In 1942, Michi, her family, and other Japanese Americans were incarcerated at a camp in the Arizona desert, where they endured heat, overcrowded conditions, and "inedible food." In 1944, Michi was allowed to leave to attend college. Her family and others were released in 1945. She later married and, as Michi Nishiura Weglyn, spent years meticulously researching government documents related to "relocation camps" during the war and writing *Years of Infamy*. She publicly advocated for unjustly imprisoned Japanese Americans to receive reparations, which were eventually granted. In this well-researched book, Mochizuki creates a convincing portrayal of a girl who was brought up to be restrained in her speech and respectful of government officials yet became a forceful woman demanding justice for all. Black-and-white photos depict Michi throughout her life and government documents relevant to the incarceration of Japanese Americans. A detailed biography of a significant American. —*Carolyn Phelan*

Roads to Family: All the Ways We Come to Be.

By Rachel HS Ginocchio. Illus. by Mel Latthitham.

Apr. 2023. 144p. Lerner/Twenty-First Century, lib. ed., $37.32 (9781728424545). Gr. 6–9. 612.6.



Because a typical birds-and-the-bees discussion doesn't cover the ways many families form, Ginocchio introduces various medical and societal methods used today to create a family unit. She begins with a primer on the "sperm delivery network" and the "egg and baby transport system" (never gendering each reproduction system) and how they function to create a pregnancy. Noting that this isn't always an option for individuals and couples, the author turns instead to assisted reproduction. Chapters on insemination and in vitro fertilization not only describe how these methods work but raise such related issues as infertility, egg donation, surrogacy, donor agreements, and considerations for LGBTQIA+ parents. Still another chapter looks at adoption and fostering to expand a family. Within each chapter, Ginocchio tells engaging, lengthy stories, based on interviews, of several racially and ethnically diverse parents, from same-sex relationships to individuals who wanted to be parents to heterosexual couples struggling with infertility, and how they brought children into their lives. She's careful to approach each method of family creation as a range of possibilities rather than a single story. A final chapter considers donor-conceived perspectives with running stories of several donor-conceived individuals and their experiences with finding out about their conception and meeting donor-siblings. Supplemental facts and figures as well as enlightening graphics enhance this much-needed and inclusive resource. —*Angela Leeper*

Welcome to Consent: How to Say No, When to Say Yes, and How to Be the Boss of Your Body.

By Yumi Stynes and Melissa Kang. Illus. by Jenny Latham.

Mar. 2023. 224p. Candlewick/Walker, $17.99 (9781536226171). Gr. 9–12. 176.

There's been a lot of conversation regarding consent and its place in intimate relations. This selection takes a broader definition, extending consent into all social interactions, real world and virtual. Upbeat text, cheerful illustrations, and entertaining graphics convey body-affirming messages, reminding young adults that they are the bosses of their own bodies and they get to determine physical, social, and emotional boundaries of touching, hearing, seeing, and being seen. Relatable scenarios define challenging situations (power imbalances, peer pressure, cultural differences) and offer suggestions on handling uncomfortable encounters using precise words and phrases. There's advice about when to keep secrets and when not to, along with where, and how, to ask for help. The final portion of the book deals with more mature content. Readers are asked if they're ready to read about serious stuff (porn, intercourse, legal age of consent and consequences, hookups, sexting, etc.) and if not, advised to just skip it until later. The accurate medical information, practical advice, relevant examples, lists of resources, and visual appeal make this an approachable and accessible guide for teens. —*Kathleen McBroom*

Middle Readers

Alone: The Journeys of Three Young Refugees.

By Paul Tom. Illus. by Mélanie Baillairgé. Tr. by Arielle Aaronson.

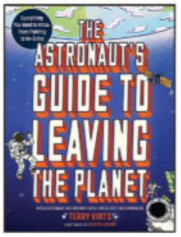
May 2023. 144p. Groundwood, $21.99 (9781773069272). Gr. 4–8. 305.23086.

The author, who was born in a Thai refugee camp to Cambodian parents, recounts stories of three unaccompanied minors who sought asylum in Canada. In chapters that address reasons for leaving, saying goodbye, the journey, and adjustments to a new life, Tom profiles Afshin (an Iranian teen avoiding the draft), Alain (a Burundi youth whose mother died and whose father was imprisoned), and Patricia (a Ugandan whose identity as a lesbian makes her a target for discrimination). The teens' stories are told in simple language that conveys the physical dangers they faced as well as the emotional toll of being uprooted without parents to a completely different culture. Baillairgé's digital art employs bold colors (black, red, and green) and simple shapes that convey the settings, feelings, and differences between Canada and their countries of origin. Speech balloons and graphic panels are also used, personalizing the presentation. Based on Tom's documentary film of the same title and appended with updates about each of the profiled refugees, this will serve to humanize the circumstances of those seeking safe haven. —*Kay Weisman*

The Astronaut's Guide to Leaving the Planet.

By Terry Virts. Illus. by Andrés Lozano.

Apr. 2023. 176p. Workman, paper, $14.99 (9781523514564). Gr. 4–7. 629.45.



Virts, a retired space-shuttle pilot and International Space Station commander and author of *How to Astronaut* (2020), brings his insider experience and inspirational storytelling style to young readers in this enhanced memoir of his career. After a brief overview of the space race and space-shuttle missions, Virts explains some of the skills needed to be an astronaut, like learning how to administer CPR by "standing" on the ceiling to push on someone's chest, through his own task-filled training. Another chapter is dedicated to his first space-shuttle launch, with honest takes on wearing diapers ("it's a long time before we can use a bathroom") and the dangers of space, a section that includes information on the *Challenger* explosion. The most popular chapters, however, are sure to be those about living in space (with more bathroom updates), spacewalking, and Earth views from space. Along the way, Virts' upbeat narrative presents not only fascinating details about everyday functions, such as eating and sleeping, but the impact of space on the human body and what viewing Earth from space can tell us about wealth distribution and climate change. A final chapter considers what's on the horizon in space ex-

Did You Know?

We flag books published for adults with notable teen appeal. Look for **YA, YA/C**, and **YA/S** in the Adult Books section for titles we recommend for YA readers.

ploration. Photos of the author in action as well as related graphics and activities help readers imagine astronauts at work. A fun, fact-filled reflection of space-bound adventure. —*Angela Leeper*

Boundless.

By Chaunté Lowe.

Mar. 2023. 240p. Scholastic/Focus, $18.99 (9781338741520). Gr. 4–7. 796.43.

Many kids dream of being Olympians, but only a few make it. The physical, mental, emotional, and financial demands can be overwhelming for anyone, let alone a child who regularly experienced hunger, domestic violence, and homelessness. Lowe, a champion record-holding high jumper, first learned about the Olympics in 1988 when she was four years old. She remembers how her neighbors erupted with joy when Florence Griffith Joyner (FloJo) set a new 100-meter Olympic record at the Seoul Summer Olympic Games. Lowe decided then and there that she was going to be an Olympian, and here she shares her story of moving from impoverished child to NCAA champion to Olympic athlete in an engaging, well-rounded autobiography. Lowe, a TED Talk inspirational speaker, includes wonderfully detailed descriptions and telling anecdotes that go far beyond athletic pursuits, letting her personality shine through as she introduces family members and friends and talks about the incredible support they've given her, no matter the occasionally erratic circumstances. Readers don't have to be Olympian wannabes to appreciate this inspirational story about following a dream. —*Kathleen McBroom*

Ecology for Kids: Science Experiments and Activities Inspired by Awesome Ecologists, Past and Present.

By Liz Lee Heinecke.

Apr. 2023. 128p. illus. Quarto/Quarry, paper, $19.99 (9780760375693). Gr. 3–5. 577.

The Kitchen Pantry Scientist series resumes with a focus on ecology. Keeping the same format, this volume pairs profiles of 25 ecologists (13 men and 12 women) with related activities. Beginning with the naturalist explorer Alexander von Humboldt, the profiles continue chronologically with a few well-known scientists and environmentalists, like George Washington Carver and Wangari Maathai. Others, such as Robin Wall Kimmerer, a Native American moss scientist, and Aparajita Datta, a scientist from India who studies hornbill birds, may be new to young readers. Each profile features a full-page illustration of the ecologist and a short biography that recognizes the ecologist's influences and contributions to the field. Hands-on experiments (many of which actually occur in nature, outside of the kitchen) allow children to synthesize such introduced concepts as erosion, biodiversity, germination, and invasive species. In addition to a materials list (with household items and organic matter), step-by-step instructions, and photos of kids in action, a "science behind the fun" section offers more explanation. This tried-and-true design treats ecology as the lively science it is. —*Angela Leeper*

Means of Transport That Almost Changed the World.

By Štěpánka Sekaninová and Tom Velčovský. Illus. by Martin Sodomka. Tr. by Radka Knotková.

Apr. 2023. 64p. Albatros, $18.95 (9788000068459). Gr. 5–8. 620.

This upbeat, obviously well-researched work takes an unusual stance: what's interesting in transportation is what *didn't* make it—the "average, forgotten, useless, expensive, or insignificant." Vehicles are profiled in depth, including details of what inspired their creation, the history of their design, and why they failed. Well-written, engaging narratives are complemented by detailed drawings that show even small details—no surprise, as illustrator Sodomka is a former design engineer. Examples of the fascinating vehicles include the 1924 Junkers J100, a huge plane that could carry passengers in style for up to 10 hours, but didn't inspire traveler interest; the Hafner Rotabuggy, a flying jeep made for the British Air Force in WWII that took too long to work; and the Conair XFY Pogo, a Cold War plane that could take off and land vertically, but that was too uncomfortable. On show here, besides fascinating, scary, complex machines, is the ingenuity of inventors, the ways social conditions—especially conflict—set invention trends, and how failure can precede success. Though it lacks source notes, this marvelous book is ideal for browsing. —*Henrietta Verma*

No World Too Big: Young People Fighting Global Climate Change.

Ed. by Lindsay H. Metcalf and others. Illus. by Jeanette Bradley.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Charlesbridge, $18.99 (9781623543136); e-book, $9.99 (9781632899644). Gr. 3–5. 811.608.

Introducing climate change–combating young people and related actions readers can take, this unusual, quietly forceful book will be a great addition to classroom and public library shelves. It starts with a macro view, with the editors briefly explaining to readers what "nearly all of the world's countries" agreed to in the Paris Agreement: "to reach climate neutrality—no increase in the greenhouse effect—by 2050." The book then zooms in on individuals and groups of young people who aren't waiting for that change. Short prose explanations of their actions are accompanied by poems in various forms that memorably address the same topics. Greta Thunberg is here, but the book also introduces lesser-known activists, such as teens from the Marshall Islands who teach their peers to advocate for island-saving progress and Leah Namugerwa, a Ugandan who planted 200 trees on her fifteenth birthday and whose Birthday Trees project helps others follow suit. Digital images portray each person in an artful but realistic style, giving the serious topic a welcome, hopeful air. Closing the work is a helpful guide to the poetry forms used. —*Henrietta Verma*

Who's Got Mail? The History of Mail in America.

By Linda Barrett Osborne.

May 2023. 240p. illus. Abrams, $22.99 (9781419758966). Gr. 5–8. 383.

What's the most popular and best-selling stamp to date? That and much more are revealed in this informative and fun history of the U.S. Postal Service. It's full of fascinating facts, such as that, in the early 1900s, some parents actually mailed their children via parcel post to visit relatives in order to save the cost of a train ticket! The book recounts how the establishment of post offices around the country led to investment and improvement in the transportation system. The early diversity among adventurous people who worked as postmasters, postal carriers, and clerks is included, and the text discusses the pony express, commemorative stamps, the trials and triumphs of airmail service, zip codes, the lack of post offices on Native reservations, voting by mail, and the postal service's financial problems. Despite issues, surveys show that people, especially those living in rural areas, consider the postal service to be essential. A well-researched and appealingly designed book. With historical and color photos, sidebars, a time line, notes, a selected bibliography, and an index. —*Sharon Rawlins*

Young

Hidden Creature Features.

By Jane Park.

Mar. 2023. 32p. illus. Lerner/Millbrook, lib. ed., $29.32 (9781728445670). K–Gr. 3. 590.

Park introduces eight animals with unusual physical adaptations that allow them to survive and thrive in the wild. For each, she presents a succinct, rhyming couplet ("I swim for fish by flapping my flippers. I grab them in my bill . . . / with my grippers") and an inset further explaining the accommodation (bristles on penguins' tongues help them grip food). Crisp, full-color stock photos are used throughout, allowing readers to view these animals and their distinctive attributes, often up close. Some animals will be familiar (penguins and owls with bristly tongues and strong legs); others less so (red-eyed tree frogs, platypuses, and pangolins, which utilize double eyelids, venomous spurs, and foot-long tongues, respectively); and a few will certainly be new (sarcastic fringe heads, colugos, and pacu sport large mouths, parachute skin, and grinding teeth, respectively). A final spread asks readers to contemplate their own singularity. Appended with a glossary and further reading, this makes a good choice for primary science units emphasizing diversity in the animal world. —*Kay Weisman*

Youth Fiction

Older Readers

An Appetite for Miracles.

By Laekan Zea Kemp.

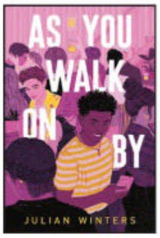
Apr. 2023. 448p. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316461733). Gr. 7–10.

Life takes a series of vicious turns for teens Danna and Raúl. Danna is grappling with the gradual loss of her grandfather as he dips further and further into the grips of dementia. Raúl struggles with an incarcerated mother who returns home fractured and broken. When Danna and Raúl find each other, they are able to navigate the valleys and peaks of their familial losses and of their newfound, blooming love. The dual point of view volleys back and forth between Danna and Raúl. It is between these two distinct views that we are given a peek into the rich, multilayered family dynamics at the heart of the story. Although we are keenly aware of Danna and Raúl's emerging love, it is through the messy, poignant moments that take place between the two different families that we discover the tenacity and resilience of that love. As always, Kemp (*Heartbreak Symphony*, 2022) writes authentic, visceral characters. Though the novel is tinged with hints of loss, there is at its very core an undeniable joy. —*Nashae Jones*

As You Walk on By.

By Julian Winters.

2023. 336p. Viking, $18.99 (9780593206508). Gr. 9–12.



Theo and his two best friends, Jay and Darren, are known around school for their flashy Friday dares. They're also stars on the track team, but it's the dares that have made them famous—and have landed them occasional detentions. When Jay dares Theo to ask Christian, his crush, to their junior prom, it seems like a can't-lose, especially since if he does it, wealthy Jay is promising to foot the bill for the prom that Theo couldn't afford on his own. Theo has already been wrestling with his changing friendship with white Jay, who just doesn't seem to understand him the same way that Darren, who's Black like Theo, does. But so what if Jay has been even weirder since Theo came out, when a perfect prom is on the line? But when the dare is a complete disaster, Theo winds up stuck in a bedroom at a Friday night party with a strange assortment of people he barely knows: a former friend, a student on the outside of everything, a girl who's the butt of every sexual joke, and a boy who Theo keeps seeing at his worst moments. Over the course of one night, the five start asking questions about the prejudices at their school, the realities of their friendships, and the truth about their own desires. Move over, *Breakfast Club*: this one has a lot to say. —*Maggie Reagan*

Chloe and the Kaishao Boys.

By Mae Coyiuto.

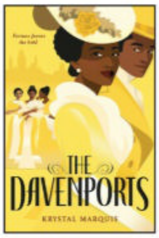
Mar. 2023. 352p. Putnam, $18.99 (9780593461631); paper, $11 (9780593619773). Gr. 9–12.

As a Chinese Filipina girl in Manila, Chloe feels stuck needing to follow the path set by her loving but overbearing family. Her acceptance to the University of Southern California, therefore, is all the more meaningful, as it's her ticket to a future of her own design—one in which she can pursue a career in animation. First, however, she must get through the elaborate party her family is planning for her eighteenth birthday, including the arranged dates her father sets up to help her find a partner for the big event (a mask for his sneaky scheme to persuade Chloe to stay in Manila). Indeed, when she seems to fall for one of her dates, it makes her question whether leaving is the right choice. Coyiuto's lovely debut is quite funny and filled with fantastic family banter. As readers follow Chloe through different dates, they will root for her as she struggles with matters of the heart, including romance, family, and how hard it can be to make a life-changing choice. —*Aurora Dominguez*

The Davenports.

By Krystal Marquis.

2023. 384p. Dial, $19.99 (9780593463338). Gr. 7–10.



It's 1910, and in Chicago, the Davenports are one of the few Black families to achieve wealth and status. Formerly enslaved William Davenport runs a successful carriage company and searches futilely for the brother he was separated from when they escaped slavery. His three children are preoccupied with the present. Olivia, the perfect society girl, knows it's her responsibility to marry well. But as a handsome civil rights lawyer opens her eyes to the realities Black people face, she begins to wonder if there's more beyond her world. Her younger sister Helen's days spent fixing cars and dreaming of taking over their father's business are the worst-kept secret in town, until her sister's erstwhile suitor sweeps her off her feet. Their brother, John, is falling for Amy-Rose, the mixed-race maid saving up for her own shop and facing suspicion from the Black community for her lighter skin. And Ruby, Olivia's best friend, tries to win John's affections as her family's fortunes fail, but she may accidentally be falling for the man she's made her pawn. Though it has the compulsive readability of *Gossip Girl*, this debut was inspired by the true, little-known history of the C.R. Patterson & Sons carriage company. As a forgotten history, as a celebration of Black entrepreneurship, and as a tale of ambitious young women forging their own paths, it should be widely shared. —*Maggie Reagan*

Divine Rivals.

By Rebecca Ross.

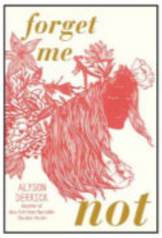
Apr. 2023. 368p. St. Martin's/Wednesday, $18.99 (9781250857439). Gr. 10–12.

Iris Winnow is a journalist locked in a battle for columnist with newsroom rival Roman Kitt. Her mother is struggling with addiction, and her brother is missing at the front lines of a war between gods. Missing him deeply, she writes letters to no one—and, to her surprise, responses appear. Iris forges a deep connection with her secret correspondent, not knowing that the person she is falling in love with is actually her rival. When tragedy strikes, she goes to the front as a war correspondent, and Roman follows. This book, the first in the Iris at the Front series, is YA historical fiction with a touch of fantasy. Ross weaves the letters that Iris and Roman exchange into the account of their lives in the newsroom and at the front. The gods are a distant but encroaching presence in the story, which focuses primarily on the reality of everyday people at war. Stories of the gods are interspersed throughout the book, which will appeal to fans of mythology combined with everyday life as well as enemies-to-lovers romance. —*Marija Lukic*

Forget Me Not.

By Alyson Derrick.

Apr. 2023. 320p. Simon & Schuster, $19.99 (9781665902373). Gr. 9–12.



Stevie and Nora have a plan: after graduation, they're going to leave their hometown of Wyatt, Pennsylvania, and move to California, where Stevie will attend UCLA and Nora will work at a farm. But after Stevie has a serious accident during a romantic afternoon with Nora, Stevie suddenly can't remember the last two years—not coming out to her mom, not drifting away from her conservative parents, not the lies she's been telling her childhood friends to hide her sexuality, and not even her relationship with Nora. Stevie is navigating unfamiliar territory, rediscovering who she is, and questioning her sexuality anew, all while Nora is terrified to tell her she's more than just the girl who saved her life. Derrick's solo debut is a punch to the gut in the best way, filled with incredibly real, layered characters whose choices throughout the story feel earned. The gentle, compassionate writing puts readers right alongside Stevie as she figures out who she was and wants to be, and it's impossible not to root for her and Nora. Also especially resonant is Stevie's relationship with her mom, from whom she feels distanced but can't put her finger on why. The two find their way back to each other, and Stevie's parents' emotional growth is palpable throughout. A perfect read for anyone who loves a hauntingly sad LGBTQ+ story but wishes to have their heart treated with care. —*Alaina Leary*

Free Radicals.

By Lila Riesen.

Mar. 2023. 400p. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, $18.99 (9780593407714). Gr. 9–12.

Riesen makes her debut with this modern tale of a young Afghan American girl coming to terms with her identity. High-school sophomore Mafi Shahin has a few things on her mind: Baba's relatives in Kabul, her overachieving older siblings, the very hot Jalen Thomas, obtaining her license, and being the "Ghost" of Santa Margarita High. After a malicious rumor spread during her freshman year, Mafi became a social outcast. As a result, she turned into a vigilante for students who leave notes for the Ghost, and she secretly seeks revenge for them. As Mafi tries to live her idea of a normal life, her family's heritage resurfaces, which, for her own reasons, she's afraid to reveal. However, newfound friendships, love interests, and family connections soon allow her to strengthen her courage. Riesen raises awareness of issues many young adults experience, such as family drama, xenophobia, racism, prejudice, and trolling. Teens will relate to the protagonist's struggles to build trust and be honest with others, all the while carrying trauma. *—Beronica Garcia*

Girl Forgotten.

By April Henry.

Mar. 2023. 272p. Little, Brown/Christy Ottaviano, $18.99 (9780316322591). Gr. 9–12.

In Henry's latest engrossing mystery, Piper Gray is a true-crime enthusiast with a hunger for investigating unresolved mysteries. After learning of the unsolved case of Layla Trello from more than 17 years earlier, she starts a podcast and digs into the story. The podcast is the distraction she needs, especially after her mother's recent death, which which led her to move to the same place where Layla's murder occurred. Piper's new project leads to a sudden rise in her popularity at school, which makes her suspicious of trusting anyone, and the suspense ratchets up when she starts receiving eerie death threats meant to stop her work. Readers will be kept guessing throughout, but they will stay grounded through Piper—especially her struggles and her passion for gory stories—as her podcast grows in popularity and people are reintroduced to the cold case. The pages fly by until a final reveal that will leave readers questioning everything they thought they knew about the story. *—Aurora Dominguez*

The Immeasurable Depth of You.

By Maria Ingrande Mora.

Mar. 2023. 352p. Peachtree Teen, $18.99 (9781682635421); e-book, $11.99 (9781682635438). Gr. 9–12.

The Immeasurable Depth of You
Maria Ingrande Mora

After 15-year-old Brynn writes a Tumblr post about wanting to die, her mom sends her to stay for the summer with her dad, who lives on a houseboat in the swamps of Florida. But though Brynn's half-hearted Tumblr post wasn't ultimately serious, her mental illnesses are: her intense anxiety and OCD mean she is constantly riddled with intrusive thoughts about death, and while she doesn't truly want to die, she struggles to explain how difficult living can be. Florida, with its alligators and snakes, its hurricanes and disease-carrying insects, overwhelms her. And then, on a tentative solo paddleboarding outing, she meets Skylar: a girl in a yellow bikini who's a little mean, a lot confident, and seems to actually see Brynn. Bisexual Brynn is drawn to Skylar immediately, but something seems off, and Brynn soon learns that Skylar is the ghost of a girl who drowned several years ago in the bayou. Skylar's family believes she died by suicide, but she insists she was murdered, and Brynn is determined to discover the truth. Mora (*Fragile Remedy*, 2021) walks a delicate line with their sophomore novel, and while Brynn's narration is often agonizingly tender, it is never overwrought. Brynn's parents, while they may not understand exactly what she's living through, parent her with compassion and support. Without shying away from the ways mental illness can impact a life, Brynn's story blooms with hope and fierce love, and every step feels earned. *—Maggie Reagan*

A Long Stretch of Bad Days.

By Mindy McGinnis.

Mar. 2023. 368p. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, $17.99 (9780063230361). Gr. 9–12.

Everyone expects Lydia Chass to be perfect. It's in her name, famous throughout Henley as one associated with excellence and charity. Through guidance-counselor error, she is one credit shy of graduation. But Lydia has a plan. She'll earn that final credit by producing a podcast about a single tragic week in the 1990s, known as Henley's "long stretch of bad days," which saw a tornado, flash flood, and the town's sole homicide. Luckily (or maybe unluckily), she teams up with Bristal Jamison—Lydia's opposite in scholastic achievement and reputation—whose own checkered family history is wrapped up in the "long stretch." Quickly, they find out that when you dig up the past, there's always someone who wants to keep truths buried. McGinnis presents Lydia as an entitled know-it-all yet still manages to establish her as a charismatic narrator. The author's command of voice is excellent, making it a joy to see how Lydia clashes with Henley's other denizens, especially Bristal. Ultimately, both girls must question the legacies of their families in this page-turner of a mystery. *—Reinhardt Suarez*

HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: McGinnis can be counted upon for delivering gritty truths wrapped in compelling stories, and readers love her for it.

Once There Was.

By Kiyash Monsef.

Apr. 2023. 416p. Simon & Schuster, $18.99 (9781665928502). Gr. 6–9.

"Once was, once wasn't." Monsef's debut novel opens with a fable about a girl who saves a unicorn. It then jumps to current-day Berkeley, where 15-year-old Marjan Dastani struggles to keep her dad's veterinary clinic afloat while also trying to be a normal high-schooler. Her dad died under mysterious circumstances, and Marjan, now an orphan, has been forced to grow up fast. She is soon called on by a secret society to take her dad's place and is sent on an adventure to help heal a magical beast. Marjan must navigate this new life and her feelings of anger and abandonment, all while aiding strange creatures like djinns and unicorns. She has also begun uncovering clues to who murdered her father. The fables interweave old lore with the contemporary world to guide Marjan on her journey. The main character is Iranian American, and the story's themes include mixed-race identity and holding two worlds, as well as grief and loss. *—Bobbie Peyton*

The Quiet and the Loud.

By Helena Fox.

Mar. 2023. 400p. Dial, $18.99 (9780593354582). Gr. 9–12.

George's dad left her in the middle of a lake when she was nine. She keeps her memories of him, and the effects of his addiction on her family, deeply buried until he starts sending her repeated texts that they need to talk. Now 18, she has enough happening between her best friend Tess' pregnancy and her friend Laz's despair over the climate crisis. When George meets Calliope, a girl with whom she can be herself more than with anyone else, long-suppressed emotions resurface. As wildfires rage in Australia, Tess gives birth, and George finds out her father is dying, she confronts her trauma. This is a contemporary YA novel with a sensitive portrayal of complex PTSD. Flashbacks and lyrical descriptions of George's art add further dimension. George's complicated relationships with her father and Tess—for whom she has been swallowing her own pain for years—take center stage. This book will appeal to readers who enjoy realistic YA fiction that deals with issues of mental health. *—Marija Lukic*

Rosewood: A Midsummer Meet Cute.

By Sayantani DasGupta.

Mar. 2023. 320p. Scholastic, $19.99 (9781338797725). Gr. 9–12.

Mallika and Eila Das, two desi girls still grieving the loss of their father three years ago, don't agree on much. One thing they definitely can't agree on is the Regency detective TV show *Rosewood*: Mal loves it, while Eila finds it unnecessarily smutty. They both get accepted into a *Rosewood*-themed Regency summer acting camp for the summer with a *Taming of the Shrew* twist: Mal can go only if her sister does. So a reluctant Eila agrees to attend, intent on learning *anything* about acting, the dream job she knows she'll never get. She may just learn how to combat her rising anxiety, at an all-time high since Baba's death, and she might even fall for enticing fellow camper Rahul—a rake, or famous actor going incognito? *Rosewood* starts with a sibling squabble over what makes good art, and the thread continues throughout the story. This is an obvious pick for teen *Bridg-*

erton lovers, but it will also find a home with *Never Have I Ever* fans. —*Stacey Comfort*

Royal Blood.

By Aimée Carter.

Mar. 2023. 352p. Delacorte, $18.99 (9780593485897). Gr. 8–11.

The day after she's expelled from her ninth boarding school, Evangeline Bright finds herself heading not back to the American mother she hasn't seen in years but to London, to stay with her long-estranged father. One hiccup: that father is the King of England, and Evan is the same age as his legitimate daughter and heir, Princess Mary. While Evan's existence has been kept a secret from the people (and, more importantly, the press), the royal family is less than thrilled that she's suddenly a presence in their lives. When her identity leaks, she experiences a traumatic event, and she's implicated in a violent crime, her situation goes from not ideal to royally screwed. But even in a palace, family can be found in unlikely places. Carter (*The Goddess Test*, 2011) blends the high-interest royal intrigue of Katharine McGee's *American Royals* (2019) with Evan's buried desire to belong and a through line that addresses the stigmatization of mental illness. Sensitive and fun, with just enough mystery to keep readers on the hook for book two. —*Maggie Reagan*

This Delicious Death.

By Kayla Cottingham.

Apr. 2023. 304p. Sourcebooks/Fire, paper, $11.99 (9781728236445). Gr. 9–12.

Hoping for one normal summer before graduation, Zoey and her three best friends take their cooler full of synthetic organs to Desert Bloom, a multiday music festival in the Mojave Desert, one of the first large social events allowed since the Hollowing, when a small part of the population transformed into flesh-eating ghouls. With the invention of SynFlesh, which satisfies ghouls' craving, those afflicted were reintegrated into normal life, though not without dissent. At first the festival is perfect—crowds, music, parties, cute boys (though bi Zoey is more interested in her friend, trans girl Celeste)—but they find themselves in trouble when one of them goes temporarily feral and kills and eats someone. With some investigating, they learn her drink was laced with an unknown drug that could ruin ghouls' chances of leading normal lives forever. Cottingham blends black comedy with queer romance and self-aware nods to zombie fiction and current politics in this mystery that, while campy, doesn't pull back from its gorier, harrowing horror elements. A fresh take on the world post-zombie apocalypse. —*Krista Hutley*

Middle Readers

The Deadlands: Hunted.

By Skye Melki-Wegner.

Apr. 2023. 304p. Holt, $16.99 (9781250827692). Gr. 4–7.

Fifty years after a falling star wreaked havoc on the prehistoric landscape, two dinosaur kingdoms are locked in a never-ending war. Eleri, a young oryctodromeus, dreams of being a storyteller, not a soldier; but when he inadvertently saves a foe's life, he finds himself exiled to the dreaded Deadlands, a scorched desert left to lawless carnivores and offering endless ways to die. Eleri happens upon exiles from the enemy kingdom, and while they're all desperate enough to put aside their animosity, it's unclear how long the uneasy truce will last. When they learn of a traitorous plot to take down *both* kingdoms, they realize they'll have to work together to save their worlds and return home. The terrific series opener is packed with detailed dinosaur data and humorous asides, and the world building is well developed, with intricate mythologies, governments, and histories in place from the start. The growing rapport between species is a delight, and though the focus is on friendship and family, there are deeper meditations on morality and war. A treat for any dinosaur devotee. —*Emily Graham*

The Department of Lost Dogs.

By Josephine Cameron.

Apr. 2023. 336p. illus. Farrar, $17.99 (9780374389758). Gr. 3–6.

It's been two years since the McDade kids collared a thief in the dog-obsessed town of Camelito, but due to a dearth of mysteries, their detective agency has since disbanded. Eleven-year-old Elrond "Rondo" McDade, an introverted Houdini expert, is looking forward to a quiet spring break despite the family B&B having been temporarily turned into the set of his favorite canine-detective TV show. The increasingly busy family is growing distant, and the siblings, including older Epic and younger Elvis, aren't as close as they once were. But when dognapping incidents threaten to halt the production, the kids find themselves at the heart of another mystery and pull back together to stop a canine cast member from disappearing. The hilarious whodunit works splendidly on its own, and fans of *A Dog-Friendly Town* (2020) will be thrilled to reunite with familiar characters from a different child's perspective. Brisk pacing, interspersed podcast transcripts, and dog puns aplenty keep the proceedings compelling for younger readers. Supersleuths and dog lovers will lap up this clever caper. —*Emily Graham*

Far Out!

By Anne Bustard.

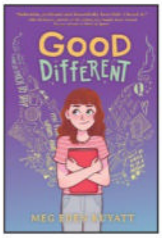
Apr. 2023. 224p. Simon & Schuster, $17.99 (9781665914192). Gr. 4–6.

Young Magnolia Jean Crook sets out to prove that it wasn't her beloved grandma Mimi who stole a prize exhibit from the library just days before their UFO-smitten Texas town hosts a "First Annual Come On Down Day" festival in hopes of luring aliens (and maybe tourists) into a visit. Unfortunately, the evidence is strong enough that Magnolia Jean's sheriff dad is forced to march his own mom off to jail. Worrisomely, Mimi's behavior is becoming more erratic as she shows signs of oncoming dementia. Bustard fills her cast with a realistic mix of friends, rivals, supportive parents, and neighborly townsfolk (many given animated faces by Rowland's vignettes at each chapter's head), capturing a vivid sense of the rhythms and atmosphere of small-town life in the early 1960s—inspired, she writes, by a real event staged in the 1970s. Readers fond of comfy tales set in small Southern towns (practically a genre all its own) will enjoy meeting Magnolia Jean. —*John Peters*

★ Good Different.

By Meg Eden Kuyatt.

Apr. 2023. 288p. Scholastic, $18.99 (9781338816105); e-book, $18.99 (9781338816129). Gr. 4–7.



This beautifully written novel in verse follows one girl's journey as she learns that she's on the autism spectrum and comes to embrace herself. Seventh-grader Selah lives by her list of how to be a "Normal" person. This school year is already hard: best friend Noelle isn't in her class, her new school uniform is itchy, her homeroom teacher is loud, and her classmates think she's weird. It's exhausting for her to hold in all the bad feelings all the time. When Selah's annoying classmate Addie starts braiding Selah's hair one day without asking, Selah instinctively lashes out. She inadvertently hits Addie and gets suspended. As she learns more about her potential autism diagnosis, a supportive English teacher assures her she's not "damaged" and encourages her to express her feelings through poetry. Selah says, "I used to think / my rules could save me, make me happy, / but all I see now are the ways / they make me feel like I'm not enough." In an author's note, Kuyatt describes her own autism diagnosis, discusses masking and the degree to which the disorder is especially misdiagnosed in girls, and provides a list of resources and tools for autistic kids and their parents and educators. Ultimately, readers will empathize with Selah and rejoice with her as she learns to accept herself as she is. —*Sharon Rawlins*

Grounded.

By Aisha Saeed and others.

May 2023. 272p. Abrams/Amulet, $18.99 (9781419761751). Gr. 3–6.

Four kids, one fast-paced night, and an opportune mystery: this middle-grade novel hits the ground running from the very first page. A storm grounds flights at Zora Neale Hurston Airport, leaving hundreds of Muslims departing an Islamic conference stranded. Among them are four incredible kids: Feek, longing to be a spoken-word artist (like his famous dad) but relegated to babysitting his sister; Hanna (sister of readers' treasured Adam from *Love from A to Z*, 2019), searching for Snickerdoodle, a cat that went missing at the

Continued on p.52

THE BOOKLIST PRINTZ INTERVIEW

SABAA TAHIR

by Maggie Reagan

Every so often, a book comes along that does the impossible: it lives up to the hype. The 2023 Printz Award winner was also crowned with the 2022 National Book Award for Young People's Literature and the Boston Globe–Horn Book Award. But more than that, Sabaa Tahir's *All My Rage* is a book about and for teenagers, a book that treats the trials (and their aftermath) of its characters with the utmost care, crafting a story that feels tender and wholly real.

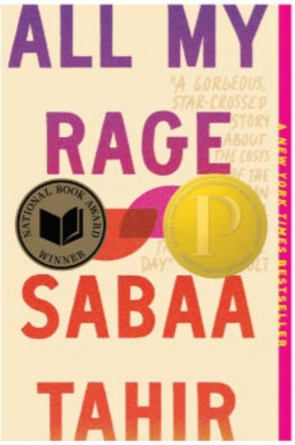
The tight, multivoice narrative tells the story of Salahudin, a teenager in California; his mother, Misbah, dying of kidney disease; and the family motel that Sal so desperately wants to save. Elsewhere, Sal's former friend Noor lives with the uncle who's been all she has since an earthquake in Pakistan killed the rest of her family, clinging to a future that seems to diminish before her. As the two friends start to find their way back to each other, their worlds spin out of their control. We spoke to Tahir about the novel—her first standalone—and its creation.

Reagan: *Salahudin's narrative is marked by events that he cannot remember; in her narrative, Noor intentionally conceals information, even from the reader. What was it like to craft these two characters side by side?*

Tahir: It was tricky and took many years. Early on, I decided I wanted it to be a polyphonic story—my favorite to both read and write. Perhaps that is a holdover from journalism, where ensuring multiple points of view is an essential part of being an editor. I also knew each character would be dealing with a set of problems that felt insurmountable. But things changed over the years: their personalities, locations, ages, and family backgrounds.

For a long time, Misbah was a much more central character. For years, I didn't even think of the story as a YA book. But characters are like friends—you get to know them over time. Noor and Salahudin gave up their secrets slowly. In the end, one doesn't work without the other. I had to develop them together because they are such a part of each other's story—"two halves of a whole," as Misbah says, meant to complement and challenge each other.

Reagan: *There are many references to other pieces of art in the text, but three in particular really give the story its spine. Can you talk about your inclusion of Elizabeth Bishop's poem "One Art," U2 and Johnny Cash's song "The Wanderer," and Ecclesiastes 1:14?*


ALL MY RAGE
"A GORGEOUS, STAR-CROSSED STORY ABOUT THE COSTS OF THE
NATIONAL BOOK AWARD WINNER
A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
SABAA TAHIR

Tahir: I've loved "One Art" since I read it as a teenager, and it seemed like a very apt poem for our characters, who are learning to deal with all manner of loss—from loss of family and home to loss of agency and self-respect. Through my life, I've turned to "One Art" for comfort. At each phase of my life, it has offered me something different. I wanted my characters to have that comfort as well, to introduce the poem to them and imagine that they would return to it throughout their lives, as I have.

As for "The Wanderer" and Ecclesiastes—I leave it to the reader to interpret the inclusion of those two. Authors do need some secrets :)

Reagan: *A recurring idea in each individual narrative is the degree to which trauma—and grief, loss, and fear—all live in the body. It's an idea that comes home in one of Misbah's last passages: "How quickly a body can betray you. It will carry you your whole life and suddenly—finished. It will carry your soul no longer. Did the soul grow too weary for the body? Did the body grow too weary for the soul?" This is such a complex concept, and you approach your characters with such care. Can you tell us more about the research that went into this element of the book?*

Tahir: Primarily, I interviewed a variety of medical professionals about this topic. I learned through my own therapy about how the body remembers, even when the mind doesn't. I'm reaching waaaay back here, but I believe I read a snippet of *The Body Keeps the Score* by Bessel van der Kolk in an e-newsletter called *The Marginalian* back in the mid-teens. That got my brain thinking about it more and I started to dig into it a couple years after that.

The topic of trauma is something that's covered in many books now, thankfully. But it's not one I'd seen much of in YA literature and if I had known as a teenager that the body can hold trauma, I would have understood myself so much better. I might not have disliked myself so much, or thought of myself as more different than, perhaps, I really was. I might have also known to talk to someone sooner about trauma.

Reagan: *Faith and forgiveness often occupy the same spaces in the text. Salahudin, whose name means "righteous of faith," struggles to find peace and meaning; for Noor, whose name means "light," forgiveness often feels like a dark and heavy burden. Can you talk about the process behind naming your characters?*

Tahir: I always put a lot of time and thought into naming characters, because a name can define a person. In America, kids are supposed to have names before they leave the hospital, but in Pakistan, where my parents were born, it can take longer to find the right name. So I take that approach, and let a name come to me as I get to know the character better.

Reagan: *Parents and parental figures are very present in this book. Very often they fail, and many of the teenager characters are paying for the sins of their parents. Noor asks Imam Shafiq for his thoughts on parenthood. As someone whose work reaches young people, what do you think we owe to them?*

Tahir: I think we owe all young people so many things. We owe them our empathy. Our understanding. We owe them our patience. And perhaps most of all, we owe them the time and effort it takes to try to make the world better for them, with whatever small skill or talent or power we might have. As a writer, I try to do this by telling the truth, and hearing their truths. Even in writing fiction and fantasy, I try to tell the truth about humanity, our strengths, and our foibles as I see them, and our incredible capacity for ingenuity and hope. Those are true things to me, and our kids deserve to see them.

Reagan: *This is an emotional read, and my first impressions, after finishing the book, were largely of the way it explored things like loss and deep grief. Rage and anger are very much there, but they're something that a lot of characters in the book hide or hide from—I think the first true on-page depiction of clear rage comes nearly 200 pages in. Tell us more about the title of the book, and the centering of anger in this quieter way.*

Tahir: Years ago, there was a kerfuffle on Twitter because of the phrase "Muslim Rage." Someone had used it in a magazine cover, and Muslim Twitter hashtagged and joked about it. "Someone just stole my parking spot at the mosque! #muslimrage"

It was hilarious, but I also thought . . . how sad that an emotion as basic and essential to humanity as anger cannot be expressed by specific groups without it being a source of fear. If a woman shouts or cries because she's angry, she's sometimes seen as being out of control. If a Muslim expresses distrust or frustration about being frisked at the airport, they're viewed as untrustworthy. If a young person says "that's not fair" or "that's wrong" the adults in their lives might say they are being childish and naive to the ways of the world. As a result, many of us hold so much anger inside and can't express it without potentially serious consequences.

That concept ends up reflecting the title. These characters are forced to hold so much of their rage inside and it's tearing them apart. The book is in a large part about their journey in dealing with that rage, acknowledging it, and figuring out what to do with it.

Continued from p.49

airport; Sami, the reserved kid who is never picked first; and Nora, always expected to be poised as the daughter of a congresswoman. In a single night and despite occasional tension, the quad rallies around a common goal: finding Snickerdoodle. In alternating points of view, the four authors—who collaborated on *Once upon an Eid* (2020)—have crafted a book that, while it brims with unapologetic Muslim rep, is about not religion but friendship and adventure. Sometimes their parents don't get them, but trust and communication abound. Hand to readers seeking a quick escape. *—Mahjabeen Syed*

Home away from Home.

By Cynthia Lord.

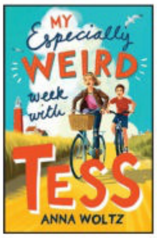
Apr. 2023. 224p. Scholastic, $17.99 (9781338726114). Gr. 4–7.

Mia is looking forward to visiting her grandmother's house in Maine, walking familiar forest paths, stopping at the ice-cream shop, and bird-watching, just the two of them. But she finds that a boy named Cayman has moved in next door and that he and her grandmother are chummy. Mia would rather not share Grandma, but the kids head off on a birding expedition, where they catch a glimpse of an enormous raptor that neither recognizes. In her determination to beat know-it-all Cayman to the punch, Mia posts about the bird online, and the town is soon overrun with photographers who threaten the bird's safety. Mia knows she can't undo the damage, but she'll do whatever it takes to put things right for the bird and the boy next door. Mia is a thoughtful and adventurous narrator, and the bighearted book gives her a chance to learn and grow on her own terms. Lord splendidly captures the coziness of a coastal town and the exhilaration of responsible wildlife encounters. A rewarding summer read with depth and charm. *—Emily Graham*

My Especially Weird Week with Tess.

By Anna Woltz. Illus. by David Dean. Tr. by David Colmer.

May 2023. 176p. Oneworld/Rock the Boat, paper, $8.99 (9780861542987). Gr. 5–7.



Within an hour of meeting Tess, Sam learns to foxtrot and conducts a funeral for an elderly man's pet canary. It's not what he expected from a family vacation on Texel Island, but he quickly learns that 12-year-old Tess is full of surprising revelations and plans. For example, her mother has never informed her father that he has a daughter, but Tess wonders about him. She has lured him to the island for a week at their vacation house so that she can meet him and decide whether to reveal her identity. At first, all goes well, but a chance remark wounds Tess, who resolves to keep her mother's secret. Now Sam must decide whether he will do the same. A year younger than Tess and gobsmacked by her energy and ingenuity, Sam narrates the story with a winning combination of joy, bemusement, and reflection that extends to his own family and the human condition as well as his new friend's predicament. From one day's eclectic activities to the next, the story's pace never falters, while Sam's observations and earnest, occasionally clueless responses to new situations add to the narrative's charm. First published in the Netherlands in 2013, this novel is fresh, amusing, and rewarding. *—Carolyn Phelan*

Opinions and Opossums.

By Ann Braden.

May 2023. 176p. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, $17.99 (9781984816092). Gr. 4–8.

Agnes doesn't know if she believes in God, especially the God that's an old white man, which is especially problematic because her life at school and her mom's job is increasingly dependent on her being a good girl in confirmation class. A chance encounter with an opossum, the words of Maya Angelou, and an anthropologist neighbor help Agnes learn that maybe she doesn't have to just lie down and play dead—maybe she can use her voice and help those around her learn to use theirs too. Though the plot concerns conservative Christianity, Braden's book is perfect for middle-graders of any faith, especially those learning to make their faith their own. The relatable core plot, which folds in themes of income inequality, sexism, and asserting one's rights, moves quickly, and while the story can sometimes feel pedantic, the strong women in Agnes' life steal the show. Agnes' growth throughout the novel and the familiar middle-grade plot points reimagined through Agnes' unique situation in her community will resonate with fans of Barbara Dee and Paul Acampora. *—Aryssa Damron*

Penny Draws a Best Friend.

By Sara Shepard. Illus. by the author.

May 2023. 272p. Putnam, $14.99 (9780593616772). Gr. 3–6.

Penny is a for-real, big-time worrier. When she starts fifth grade, she gears up for another year of comfortable friendship with her pal Violet, but suddenly Violet thinks Penny is too babyish and starts hanging out with a new crowd. While Penny tries to get back into Violet's good graces, she unexpectedly makes some new friends, and this time, they're the good kind who don't exclude her or put her down. This book is set up like Dork Diaries, with all of Penny's private thoughts and retellings of her day peppered with simple cartoon drawings showing what is going on, but they're charmingly addressed to her dog, Cosmo, instead of "Dear Diary." Readers will likely relate to her concerns, such as worrying whether people are laughing about her behind her back, feeling nervous about talking in front of people, or meeting new friends. Penny also learns that looks can be deceiving, and that rumors can be harmful as she gets to know her new misfit pals. This new series comes straight from the heart. *—Kristina Pino*

Princess Private Eye.

By Evelyn Skye.

May 2023. 320p. Disney/Hyperion, $16.99 (9781368078023). Gr. 3–5.

Gen is just a scrappy foster kid bouncing around New York City up until one day, like Mia Thermopolis, she learns that she is actually royalty from a far-off island kingdom. Once her status as the long-thought-lost princess is confirmed, she is whisked away to the Kingdom of Raldonia to begin preparations for a royal coronation. Except—someone seems bent on making sure she wears the crown. Sounds like a job for Princess Private Eye! This captivating story follows the perspective of Gen, revealing all sorts of details about what is going on around her. It is broken up into small, easy-to-digest chapters; the mystery of her kingdom's blights (all of which are being attributed to her presence) unfolds slowly, without a rush. Gen is an excellent detective, taking the time to notice things about people and her surroundings, reviewing details to look for threads of truth, and apologizing when she comes to the wrong conclusions. As this is the first entry of a new series, more mysteries are sure to follow. *—Kristina Pino*

Ruby Lost and Found.

By Christina Li.

May 2023. 304p. HarperCollins/Quill Tree, $19.99 (9780063008939). Gr. 4–7.

RUBY
LOST AND FOUND
CHRISTINA LI

Grieving for her beloved grandfather, who died in January, 13-year-old Ruby also misses her two best friends (one moved from San Francisco to New York City, the other to the girls' soccer table in the lunchroom). Still, in retrospect, getting caught ditching school during lunchtime just weeks before summer vacation wasn't smart, as her parents grounded her until summer, which she must spend mainly with Nai-Nai, her grandmother, who lives nearby in Chinatown. Gradually, she begins to enjoy being with Nai-Nai and her friends at a nearby senior center and getting to know a classmate who volunteers there. Ruby's concerns about Nai-Nai's memory escalate when her grandmother gets lost close to home. Eventually, Ruby's parents begin to readjust their thinking. Reflecting Li's knowledge of Chinese American immigrant culture, Ruby's first-person narrative is particularly engaging when she begins retracing her steps from her grandfather's legendary scavenger hunts and, with her grandmother, shares a moment of healing and unity with the past. Vividly imagined characters, relationships, and family dynamics are at the heart of this involving novel, in which building tension causes troubles that seem to dissipate but then lead to a crisis that cannot be ignored. A moving, intergenerational story with a narrator who becomes increasingly aware of others. *—Carolyn Phelan*

Spotlight on **Picture Books**

Art by Sydney Smith from *My Baba's Garden*, by Jordan Scott.

Afikomen.

By Tziporah Cohen. Illus. by Yaara Eshet.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Groundwood, $19.99 (9781773066066).
PreS–Gr. 2.

Traditionally, Jews at the Passover seder imagine that they themselves were part of the Exodus from Egypt. Cohen and Eshet's wordless picture book takes this tradition literally. When their dog steals the afikomen (a special piece of matzah), three children at the seder follow it under the table—and straight into ancient Egypt. Eshet's visuals cleverly insert the three children into the beginning of the Passover story. There they watch Moses' mother and sister place the baby in a basket on the Nile. As the basket travels down the river, the children follow. They take care to keep it safe and make sure that Pharaoh's daughter finds the baby. At last, they return home, emerging from beneath the table to sleepily finish the seder with their family. The book is sweet and fun, but it could be hard for some children to follow. It's probably best for children with a strong understanding of the seder and the Passover story, or for reading with parents and teachers who can help clarify the action. —*Miriam Aronin*

The Artist.

By Ed Vere. Illus. by the author.

Apr. 2023. 32p. Doubleday, $18.99 (9780525580874).
PreS–Gr. 2.

Musing on the question "What is an artist?" an unseen narrator tells of an artist who lives surrounded by nature, absorbing the world's beauty and joy and then expressing it through her art. One day, the artist, portrayed in the illustrations as an amiable-looking tyrannosaurus, goes to a city filled with tall, featureless buildings. She paints a small picture of a lion. Intrigued by the artist, crowds of people gather and watch her create larger murals. While painting a giraffe, she is disheartened to see that she has colored outside the lines, but a little girl comforts her, saying, "Mistakes are how you learn." The artist continues making art, and her heart is full. Realizing that making mistakes is part of the process could be a game-changer for the many kids who can't conquer their discouragement when their art falls short of their expectations. But beyond the message in the text, Vere visually communicates the artist's happiness as she transforms the drab city with colorful murals and people appreciate her vision of the beautiful, joyful world. —*Carolyn Phelan*

Dear Mr. G.

By Christine Evans. Illus. by Gracey Zhang.

Apr. 2023. 32p. Union Square Kids, $17.99 (9781454944171).
Gr. 1–3.

In this brief but poignant epistolary exchange, young Jackson's note of apology for kicking a soccer ball into his elderly neighbor's rosebush initiates a series of letters that carries on even after Mr. G is wheeled away to a senior center. He invites Jackson to transplant the rose into his yard and, later on, in what turns out to be a last message, comforts him with a reassurance that no, the roses didn't die but are just waiting for spring and are "always there, even if you can't see them." Zhang's animated, informally brushed semi-rural scenes fill in the background with summer picnics

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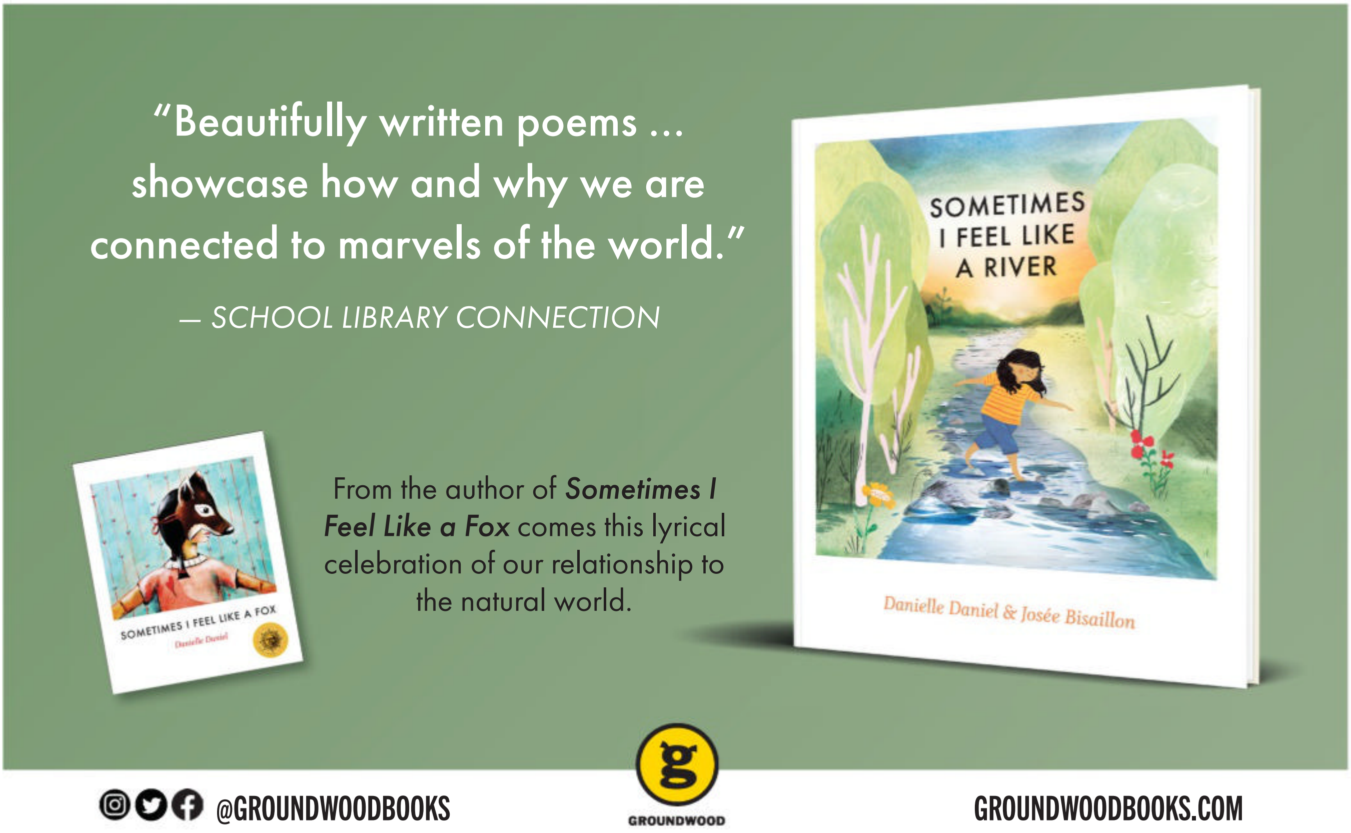

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From the author of ***Sometimes I Feel Like a Fox*** comes this lyrical celebration of our relationship to the natural world.

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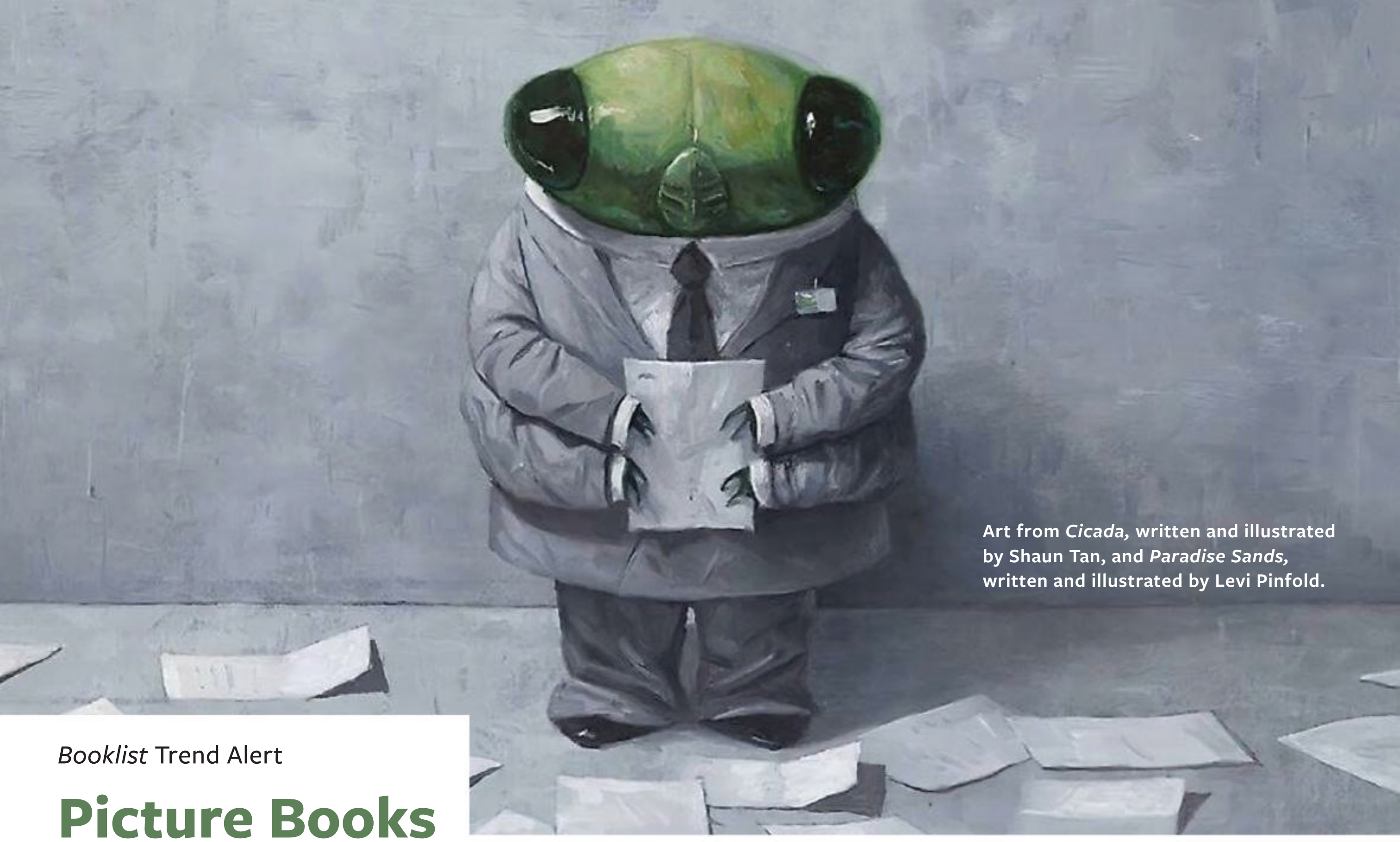
SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A RIVER
Danielle Daniel & Josée Bisaillon
SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A FOX
Danielle Daniel



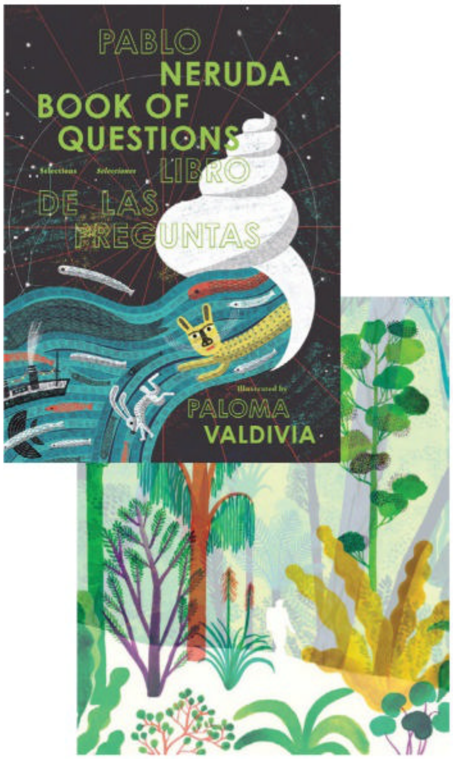
Art from *Cicada,* written and illustrated by Shaun Tan, and *Paradise Sands,* written and illustrated by Levi Pinfold.

Booklist Trend Alert

Picture Books for Older Readers

by Sarah Hunter

While picture books are most often considered to be for the youngest set, who are just learning to or can't yet read independently, the format easily lends itself to esoteric ideas and sophisticated concepts more suited to older readers. In the past several years, we've seen a spate of picture books that aren't really for young children: books that use spare text and generous illustrations to explore themes of grief, aging, war, wonder, and more, in terms that would sail right over the heads of the typical picture-book audience but will resonate deeply with older children, teens, and even adults. Read on for a list of recent and forthcoming titles that will appeal to those drawn to poetry, the darker side of fairy tales, thought-provoking explorations of one's place in the world, or a particularly bewitching piece of art.



An American Story. By Kwame Alexander. Illus. by Dare Coulter. 2023. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316473125). Gr. 3–6.

Slavery is never an easy topic to address, especially with children. Its details are horrific, so many adults avoid the subject completely. Framed as a difficult conversation between a teacher and her students, Alexander's stirring poem, paired with Coulter's dynamic multimedia artwork, urges adults to have the courage to be honest about the harsh facts of history.

Book of Questions / Libro de las preguntas: Selections / Selecciones. By Pablo Neruda. Illus. by Paloma Valdivia. Tr. by Sara Lissa Paulson. 2022. Enchanted Lion, $22.95 (9781592703227). Gr. 2–8.

This translation of Neruda's *Book of Questions* selects a number of the enigmatic, unanswerable questions that composed that poem, and pairs them with enchanting and bold print illustrations, reflecting the sense of wonder those questions spark. You don't need to be a kid to appreciate an invitation to consider the mysteries of existence.

Cicada. By Shaun Tan. Illus. by the author. 2019. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, $19.99 (9781338298390). Gr. 6–9.

Tan's titular Cicada is a mistreated office worker in a grim office building, employed by a company truly Kafkaesque in its brutal devotion to minutiae. We see Cicada retire quietly from a mundane, thankless job and begin anew outside of his dreary office. For older readers drawn to unusual narrative formats, this book could work wonders with its nuanced, hopeful depiction of individuality.

The Forest. By Riccardo Bozzi. Illus. by Violeta Lópiz and Valerio Vidali. Tr. by Debbie Bibo. 2018. Enchanted Lion, $25.95 (9781592702183). Gr. 4–7.

A walk through an increasingly dense and perilous forest becomes a pithy metaphor for aging in this poetic picture book. Stylized images of trees and plants, rendered in thick strokes of bold colors, are in striking contrast to the crisp white backgrounds. In the poignant, lyrical text, Bozzi meaningfully gestures toward love, hate, nostalgia, language, wisdom, death, and rebirth, usually indirectly, in a manner perfectly suited to art-oriented philosophical thinkers.

How War Changed Rondo. By Romana Romanyshyn and Andriy Lesiv. Illus. by the authors. Tr. by Oksana Lushchevska. 2021. Enchanted Lion, $17.95 (9781592703678). Gr. 2–4.

Rondo is an idyllic place, famous for its greenhouse and the singing flowers that grow inside. Mixed-media illustrations, like diagrams and maps, are neatly situated across the pages, giving this fantastical, allegorical story a calm sensibility. Then War comes, and the pages turn dark as Rondo's beauty is damaged. The whimsical visuals are in compelling contrast to the serious topic this tale addresses.

Paradise Sands. By Levi Pinfold. Illus. by the author. 2022. Candlewick Studio, $18.99 (9781536212822). Gr. 1–4.

Pinfold lures readers into a folkloric story aswirl with mystery, dust, and darkness in this unusual picture book. The photorealistic illustrations instantly set the scene with a rocky desert and a white, palace-like structure that threatens to trap four siblings who stumble upon it. Walking the line between dream and nightmare, this is a haunting journey that readers won't easily shake.

The Queen in the Cave. By Júlia Sardà. Illus. by the author. 2022. Candlewick Studio, $19.99 (9781536220544). K–Gr. 3.

Three sisters embark on a fantastical journey through truly mind-bending locales at the urging of the oldest sister, who feels inexorably drawn to something in the cave. There's an undercurrent of menace that gives the otherwise carnivalesque images a sharp tone, and the ambiguous ending leaves plenty of questions for readers to consider.

River. By Elisha Cooper. Illus. by the author. 2019. Scholastic/Orchard, $18.99 (9781338312263). Gr. 1–4.

An artist sets off on a 300-mile, solo canoe journey down the Hudson River in this chronicle of solitude, endurance, and artistic inspiration. Short descriptive paragraphs and evocative watercolor illustrations show differing perspectives and vary from tiny vignettes to large double-spread paintings offering many details of what she notices on her trip while remaining soft-edged.

Small Things. By Mel Tregonning. Illus. by the author. 2018. Pajama, $18.95 (9781772780420). Gr. 1–4.

In this wordless picture book, Tregonning introduces an unnamed boy grappling with corrosive anxiety. A torrent of jagged black swirls trails and surrounds the boy at every turn, and before long, his skin begins to chip away like cracked porcelain. A magnifying lens through which to identify and discuss mental illness with readers of all ages.

Tintinnabula. By Margo Lanagan. Illus. by Rovina Cai. 2018. Trafalgar Square, $19.99 (9781742975252). Gr. 2–5.

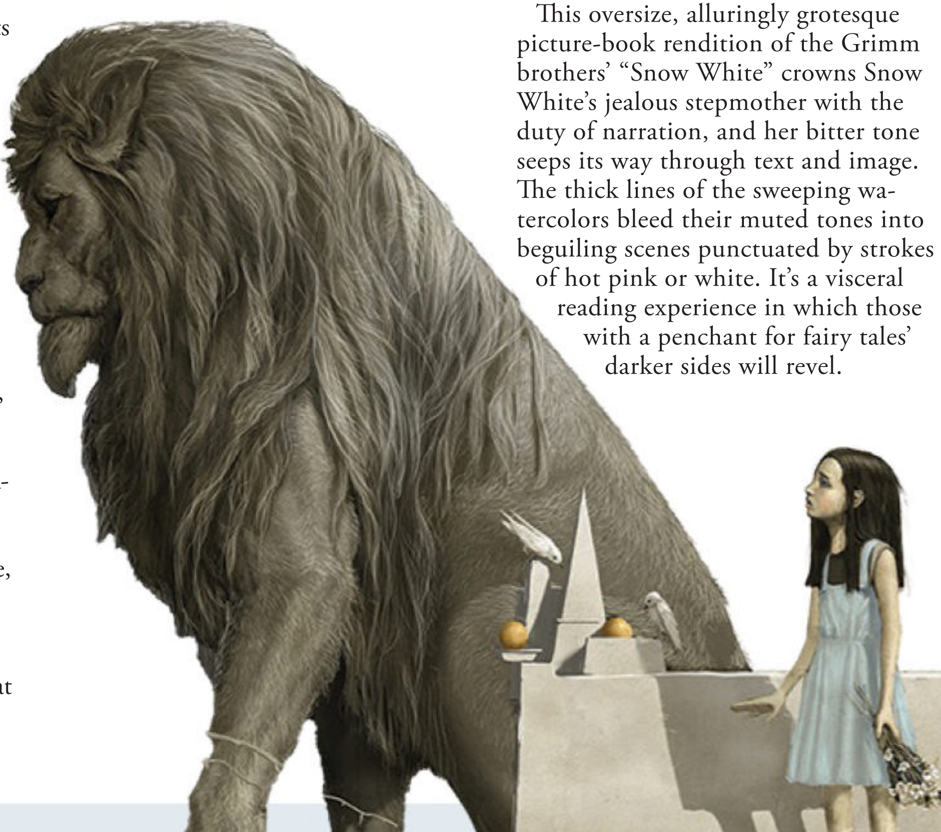
On the cover of this illustrated poem, a cutout doorway opens onto a bleak stretch of hills, a faint light on the horizon. In the first oversize pages, a child runs through a jagged, violent landscape swathed in red, chased by a wind filled with bestial creatures. Gradually, the red gives way to a gentle green as she reaches her destination. Image-driven and deeply emotional, this is a lyrical book about trauma that will speak to adults as much as it does to children.

Yellow Butterfly: A Story from Ukraine. By Oleksandr Shatokhin. Illus. by the author. 2023. Red Comet, $21.99 (9781636550640). Gr. 1–4.

Hope is a yellow butterfly in this wordless picture book from Ukraine. The arresting story begins with the image of a girl staring at the reader through a barbed wire fence. She soon sees a brilliant yellow butterfly, the only color thus far in a bleak, black-and-white world. The girl experiences fear, anger, and—ultimately—hope as the butterflies amass and dismantle the machines of war. This moving story is timely and timeless, evoking war and its aftermath without losing sight of hope.

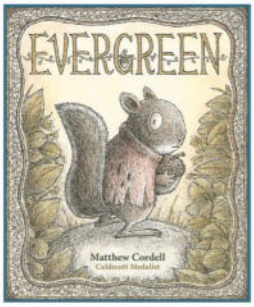
You Can't Kill Snow White. By Beatrice Alemagna. Illus. by the author. Tr. by Karin Snelson and Emilie Robert Wong. 2022. Enchanted Lion/Unruly, $24.95 (9781592703814). Gr. 7–10.

This oversize, alluringly grotesque picture-book rendition of the Grimm brothers' "Snow White" crowns Snow White's jealous stepmother with the duty of narration, and her bitter tone seeps its way through text and image. The thick lines of the sweeping watercolors bleed their muted tones into beguiling scenes punctuated by strokes of hot pink or white. It's a visceral reading experience in which those with a penchant for fairy tales' darker sides will revel.



Top 10 Picture Books about Journeys

Transformative journeys, both literal and metaphorical, are at the heart of these exceptional picture books, reviewed in *Booklist* between March 15, 2022, and March 1, 2023. *—Sarah Hunter*



Beyond the Burrow. By Jessica Meserve. Illus. by the author. 2022. Peachtree, $17.99 (9781682633755). PreS–Gr. 1.

When Rabbit accidentally journeys past the burrow, she finds herself in a new world where rabbit rules don't apply, but she learns many useful new things—and makes many non-rabbit friends—on her trip back home.

Evergreen. By Matthew Cordell. Illus. by the author. 2023. Feiwel and Friends, $18.99 (9781250317179). PreS–Gr. 1.

Fearful Evergreen ventures into the forest to deliver her mama's healing soup to Granny Oak. When other animals ask for help on the way, she's scared but bravely agrees, and each stop brings her newfound confidence.

The Hospital Book. By Lisa Brown. Illus. by the author. 2023. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823446650). PreS–Gr. 3.

A young girl walks readers through the sudden onset of an illness, her trip to the hospital, and the aftermath, both recounting her own feelings and introducing typical people, locations, and procedures kids might encounter in a trip to the ER.

Mouseboat. By Larissa Theule. Illus. by Abigail Halpin. 2023. Viking, $18.99 (9780593327357). K–Gr. 3.

While mourning her mother, Faye finds solace and emotional release by taking a brief and tumultuous but ultimately meaningful trip in the little boat they built together in this spare, gorgeously illustrated book.

The Notebook Keeper: A Story of Kindness from the Border. By Stephen Briseño. Illus. by Magdalena Mora. 2022. Random House Studio, $17.99 (9780593307052). K–Gr. 2.

Noemi and her mamá are fleeing their unsafe home when they end up stuck in a refugee encampment, waiting for their turn to cross the U.S. border. While there, the camp's notebook keeper, who keeps track of everyone's spot in line, becomes a source of hope.

Once upon a Book. By Grace Lin and Kate Messner. Illus. by Grace Lin. 2023. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316541077). K–Gr. 3.

A child stuck indoors is whisked away into a book, where she travels through wondrous settings before returning home in this lushly illustrated picture book celebrating the transportive power of reading.

The Queen in the Cave. By Júlia Sardà. Illus. by the author. 2022. Candlewick Studio, $19.99 (9781536220544). K–Gr. 3.

In gorgeous, eerie artwork stuffed with otherworldly creatures and locations, three sisters go on a wondrous nighttime adventure to find the queen, who appeared in one girl's dream, before stumbling back home by morning.

This Is Not My Home. By Vivienne Chang and Eugenia Yoh. Illus. by the authors. 2023. Little, Brown, $18.99 (9780316377102). PreS–Gr. 2.

Young Lily struggles to adjust to her family's move to Taiwan in this empathetic, incredibly illustrated picture book. Language barriers, homesickness, and a gradual acclimatization to a new place are powerful themes explored here.

Together We Ride. By Valerie Bolling. Illus. by Kaylani Juanita. 2022. Chronicle, $16.99 (9781797212487). PreS–K.

A father teaches his daughter to ride a bike in this tender, sparely written, and wonderfully illustrated tale of persistence and love recounting the ups and downs of a common childhood experience.

Yellow Dog Blues. By Alice Faye Duncan. Illus. by Chris Raschka. 2022. Eerdmans, $18.99 (9780802855534). K–Gr. 3.

Duncan explores the history of the Delta blues through one boy's journey in search of a runaway dog. Raschka's inventive textile artwork, combining embroidery, collage, and paint, adds to the vintage feel of the tale.

Continued from p.53

for a racially diverse community, new neighbors moving in, and other common events signaling the passage of time, then follow a wordless view of a downcast child getting the sad news from his mother and a final gathering to plant memorial roses. "I wish you could see them," Jackson writes. "P.S. I miss you." A sensitive, unusually oblique addition to the shelf of books aimed at helping young people cope with loss. *—John Peters*

Gustav Is Missing! A Tale of Friendship and Bravery.

By Andrea Zuill. Illus. by the author.

Apr. 2023. 40p. Random House Studio, $18.99 (9780593487471). K–Gr. 2.

Little Cap, a young red-capped mushroom in glasses and denim overalls, lives a safe and cozy life at home with his parents and pet slug BFF, Gustav. The world outside their gate is intimidating for a shy fellow like Little Cap, but one day he discovers that very gate is open, and Gustav is gone. Tamping down his many anxieties (surprises! chaos! suspect individuals!), Little Cap sets off to find his errant pal. Zuill's ink illustrations, colored in Photoshop, are full of quirky charm and humor as Little Cap determinedly questions his neighbors and critters further afield (via speech-bubble dialogue), while his concern for Gustav's well-being spurs him on past intimidating obstacles. When Little Cap finally finds Gustav (napping on a rock), the pair returns to their house, happy to be home but a little braver than when they left. Zuill's gentle adventure highlights how monumental stepping outside of one's comfort zone is and how doing so can come with unforeseen rewards. A bolstering SEL pick with a light touch. *—Julia Smith*

Hedge Lion.

By Robyn Wilson-Owen. Illus. by the author.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Andersen, $18.99 (9781728492124). PreS–Gr. 1.

Young Ida has a vivid imagination and enjoys her fanciful world where stairs become mountains, hanging on a garden gate helps her cross a river, and a large lion lives in the hedges. As she traverses the village streets with her mother and baby sister, Ida notices the creature in the bushes. The animal hides there and sadly stifles his roar—he knows people would be frightened of him, whereas nobody is afraid of shrubbery. With much coaxing and patience, Ida gradually encourages the large, golden cat's roar, which he has held back for such a long time. The intricately detailed pen-and-ink drawings highlight the gentle story and call for study. Varying perspectives allow readers to peer into the villagers' windows and view their everyday lives. Also pictured are people tending to their rooftop gardens, trying on hats in the haberdashery, buying sweets in the bakery, and walking their babies and dogs along the sidewalks. Ida's persistence and kindness helps

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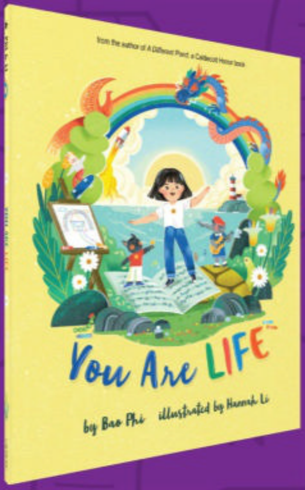
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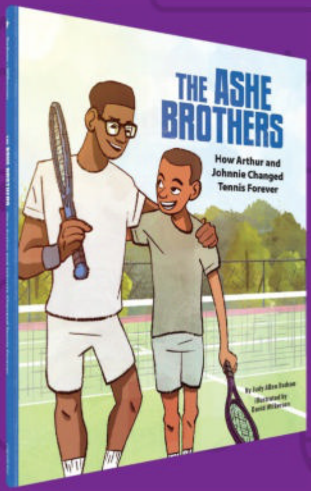
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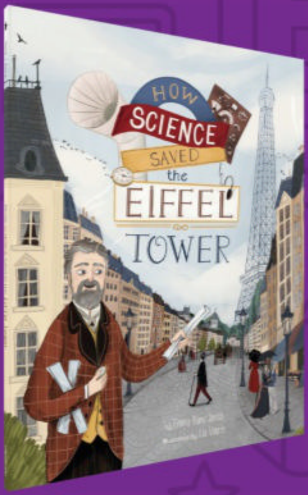
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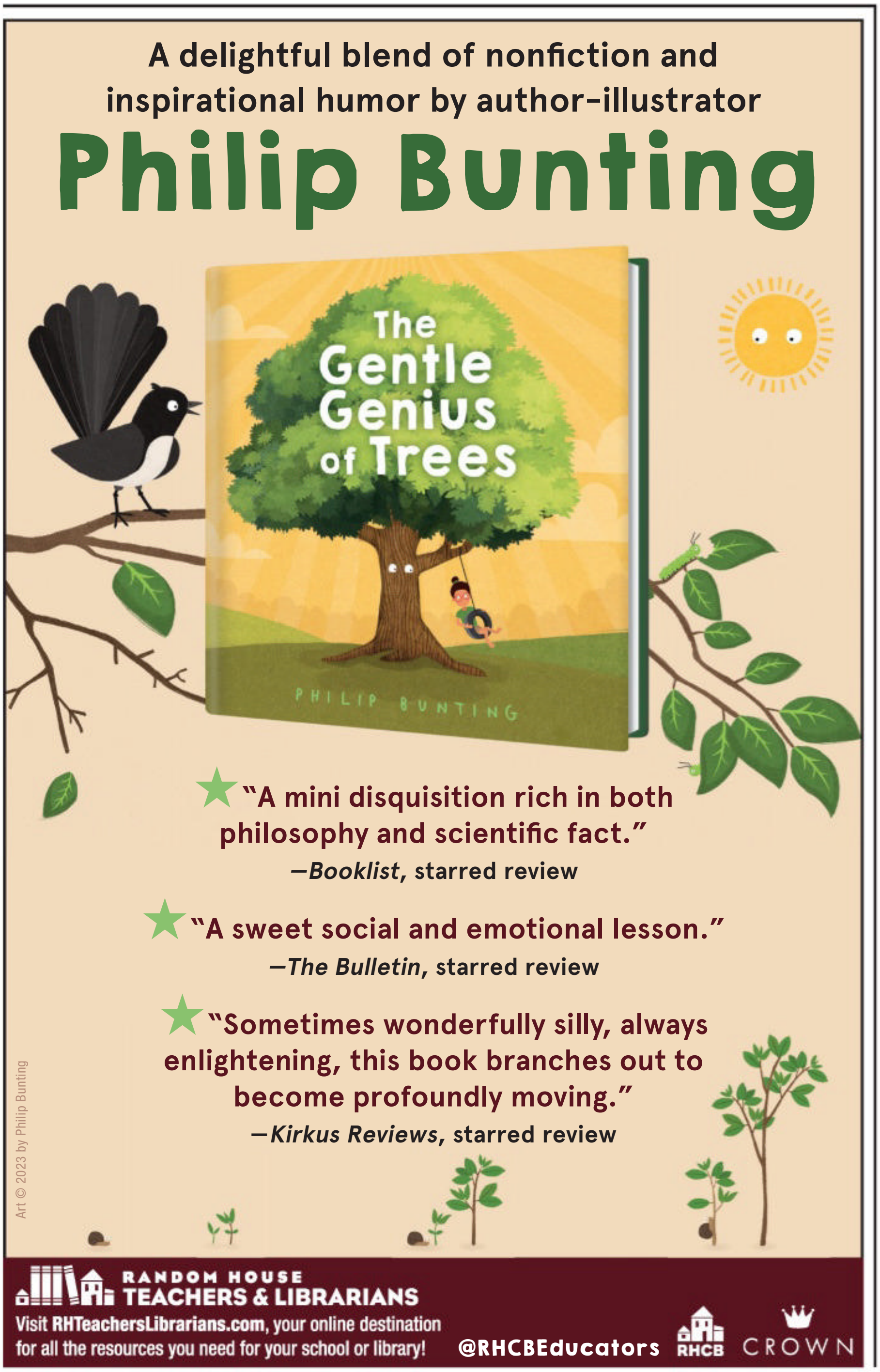
her imaginary friend find his voice, to the satisfaction of them both. —*Maryann Owen*

The Horseback Librarians.

By Jane Yolen. Illus. by Alexandra Badiu.

June 2023. 32p. Albert Whitman, $18.99 (9780807562918). Gr. 1–3.

Riding her horse, Sand, librarian Anna Mary journeys day and night through rural Kentucky as those she regularly visits anticipate her arrival. At her first stop, Anna Mary ("rhymes with library") spends time with young Adam, whose father is serving in the war; she gives him books featuring brave men. Next is Alice, who receives *Millions of Cats* and *Alice in Wonderland* ("her namesake book"). Then, at a small schoolhouse, students—and teacher—get selections from Anna Mary's saddlebag. Lively, descriptive prose and vibrant illustrations, expressively portray Anna Mary's experiences of enjoying meals, conversation, and a place to rest with people she's come to know, and sharing her "love of books, of words, of stories, and of poems." Yolen's endnote explains Anna Mary's tale was inspired by the Depression-era Works Progress Administration's Pack Horse Library project and its participants and provides some background. The topic and approach will engage and likely pique interests on many fronts while highlighting the joys and meaningfulness of connecting books with readers and listeners of all ages, wherever they may be. —*Shelle Rosenfeld*


A delightful blend of nonfiction and inspirational humor by author-illustrator
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The Gentle Genius of Trees
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—*Booklist*, starred review

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Hurry, Kate, or You'll Be Late!

By Janice N. Harrington. Illus. by Tiffany Rose.

Apr. 2023. 32p. Holiday/Margaret Ferguson, $18.99 (9780823445103); e-book, $11.99 (9780823455089). PreS–K.

Kate and her father are working hard during their morning routine to get her ready for preschool. Kate's dad must get her up, make her breakfast, and fix her hair before school. They must get her stroller and get to the bus stop. On the way to school, they pass several people they know, and Kate wants to say hello. None of those moments delay their arrival, however; ultimately, Kate is late because her dad gives her a long hug before she enters the school building. The author and illustrator craft a realistic and beautifully illustrated story about the bond between a father and a daughter. This book will make a terrific addition to collections of books about families or schools. Background details during Kate's trip to school will be engaging for little ones, who will likely relate to the experience of being rushed out the door. Pair with Matthew A. Cherry's *Hair Love* (2019) and Karamo Brown and Jason "Rachel" Brown's *I Am Perfectly Designed* (2019) for a storytime about father-child bonding. —*Tiffany Flowers*

Jitterbug.

By Kai Lüftner. Illus. by Wiebke Rauers. Tr. by Marshall Yarbrough.

Apr. 2023. 32p. NorthSouth, $19.95 (9780735844995). Gr. 1–3.

Most ladybugs are quiet and polite, but not "Jitterbug" Lady B. Marie! She's a hot-pink punk-rock beetle full of thrashing, headbanging, and searing guitar solos. While Ms. Snail, Mr. Grasshopper, and other insects don't necessarily appreciate her wailing, the arrival of a new hard-core bug band validates her by taking her under their literal and metaphorical wings, and soon what was snubbed as hubbub is deemed a hit. Translated adeptly from the original German, the rhyming couplets roll forth like song lyrics, which is unsurprising given that the author runs a children's music project in his spare time. The artwork, with its dramatic and stunning angles, is done in multimedia collage as boldly colored as the hair of an '80s punk band. And while the sophisticated language and its sheer volume (no pun intended) skew the audience a bit older than perhaps planned, the book remains a sweet and simple message about self-acceptance, individuality, and letting your voice be heard. —*Becca Worthington*

Love Makes a Garden Grow.

By Taeeun Yoo. Illus. by the author.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman, $18.99 (9781534442863). K–Gr. 2.

Grandpa's garden is filled with amazing

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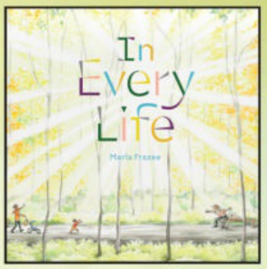
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IN EVERY LIFE

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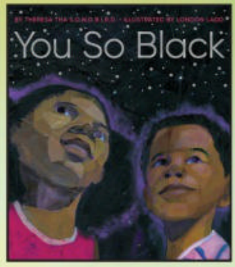
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YOU SO BLACK

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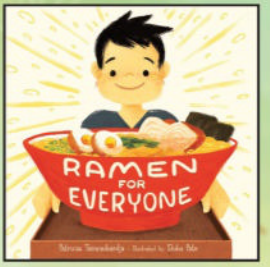
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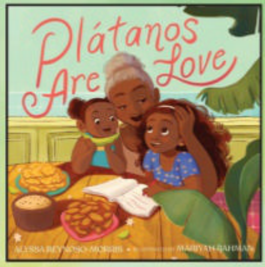
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Illustrated by
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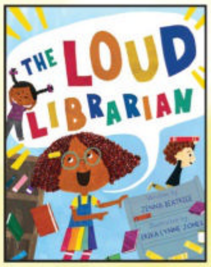
★ *Booklist*, starred review
★ *School Library Journal*, starred review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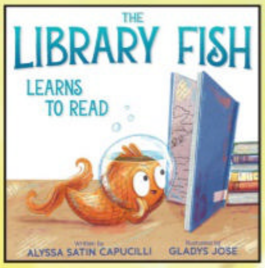
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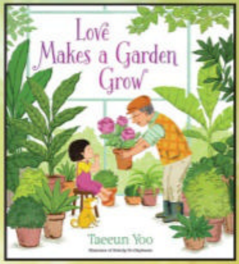
Love Makes a Garden Grow
Taeeun Yoo

LOVE MAKES A GARDEN GROW

Written and
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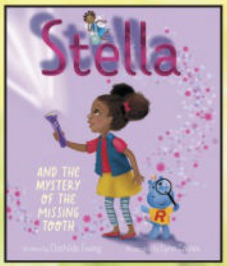
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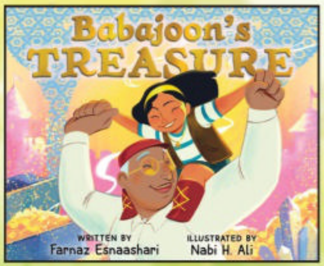
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ILLUSTRATED BY Nabi H. Ali

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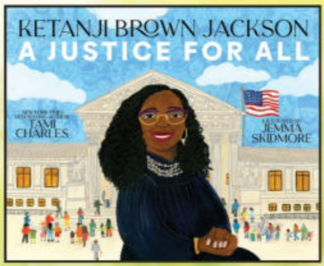
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A JUSTICE FOR ALL
TAMI CHARLES
JEMMA SKIDMORE

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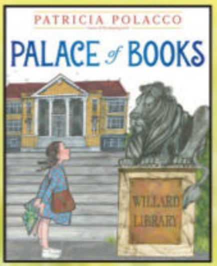
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Written and illustrated
by Patricia Polacco
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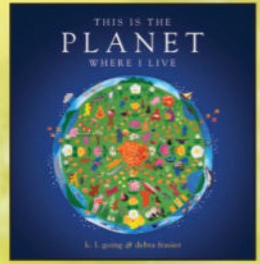
THIS IS THE PLANET WHERE I LIVE
k. l. going & debra frasier

THIS IS THE PLANET WHERE I LIVE

By K.L. Going
Illustrated by
Debra Frasier
HC: 9781481465632

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plants. His young granddaughter comes to visit when she is small like a sprout, when she is taller than a sunflower, and later tall like a tree. Watching him water and prune, she gradually learns how to help care for the plants. He gives her a peony plant, her favorite flower, to nurture for herself. Peonies become a recurring symbol of his love for her. When her grandfather grows older, she helps him move to an apartment, bringing along a small group of potted plants, including bonsai. The girl becomes an adult with a home of her own, but she never forgets what her grandfather has taught her. Eventually she brings her own daughter to visit. The comforting cyclical story is told from an adult viewpoint, but by centering the granddaughter and great-granddaughter, the story stays relevant for younger readers. Digitally colored pencil illustrations give detail to the changing settings and emphasize the family connections. *—Lucinda Whitehurst*

Mama's Chickens.

By Michelle Worthington. Illus. by Nicky Johnston.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Exisle/EK, $19.99 (9781922539458). Gr. 1–3.

At first, the story seems sweet but predictable: Mama thinks chickens will be noisy and dirty, but once they arrive, she loves them. A child narrator relates how the chickens follow Mama as she works in the yard and her favorite one, Chooky La La, sits at her feet. The text takes a turn when the little girl describes Mama forgetting things, then having trouble speaking. Unable to verbalize how she feels about her mother's illness, the girl uses the chickens as "stand-ins" for her feelings. Soft, sunny illustrations connect what is happening to the chickens in the text to what is happening to Mama's children. The family's home in a rural setting should be bucolic, but the girl's sadness is an ever-present undertone. The story does not specify exactly what is happening medically, and the mother appears to be young. The last illustrations show a family picture gallery on the wall, then the mother hugging the children and the chickens, emphasizing that no matter what, the girl will not forget her mother's love. *—Lucinda Whitehurst*

Mina Belongs Here.

By Sandra Niebuhr-Siebert. Illus. by Lars Baus. Tr. by Polly Lawson.

May 2023. 40p. Floris, $17.95 (9781782508113). PreS–Gr. 2.

The night before entering kindergarten in a new country, Mina has strange dreams. In the morning, she and her mother arrive at the classroom door, and Mina cautiously peeks through the keyhole and then enters the class. The teacher welcomes her, but the only word that sounds familiar is Mina's name. She finds "a lonely teddy bear" and holds on tight. The next day, Mina makes a friend. Each night, Mina tells Mama all about her day at school. Gradually, she learns the new language and feels so comfortable in her classroom that when a new boy arrives, she welcomes him and helps him feel at home. Created using watercolors, acrylic paints, and digital elements, the expressive illustrations include pictures of Mina's dreams as well as classroom scenes, which start out in monochrome gray tones. Gradually the scenes become more colorful and, ultimately, quite vibrant as Mina slowly picks up her new language and begins to feel part of the group. First published in Germany, this appealing picture book reflects the experiences of many immigrant children throughout the world. *—Carolyn Phelan*

★ My Baba's Garden.

By Jordan Scott. Illus. by Sydney Smith.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823450831). PreS–Gr. 2.

The creators of *I Talk like a River* (2020) here pay homage to Scott's grandmother and her pivotal role in his childhood. Every day, Dad drives Jordan to Baba's house: a converted chicken coop next to a sulfur mill, beside a highway. Baba feeds him breakfast (oatmeal with butter and vegetables from her garden) and then walks him to and from

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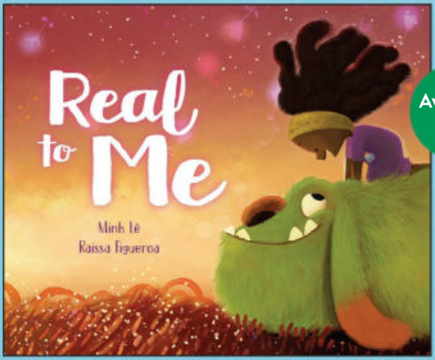
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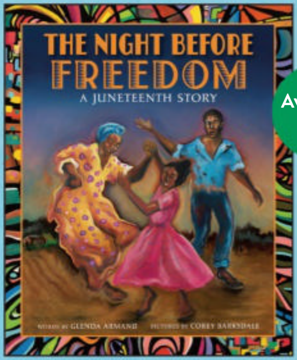
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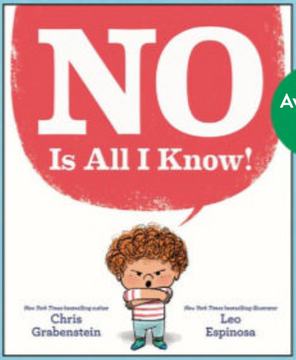
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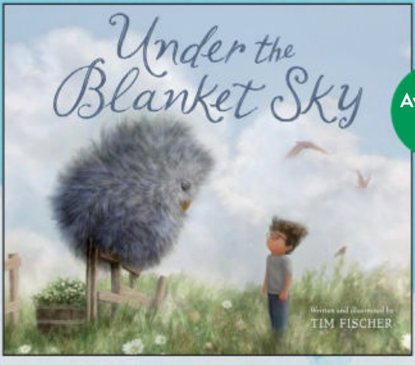
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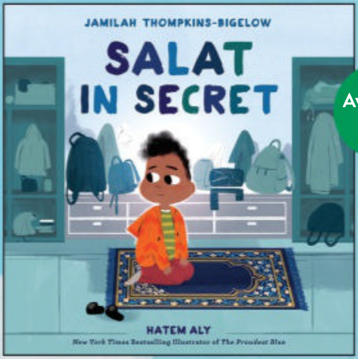
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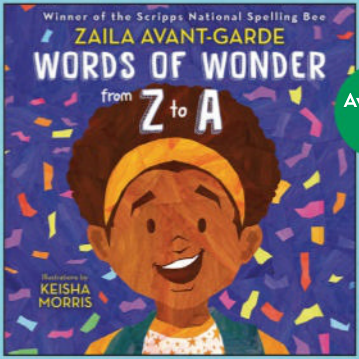
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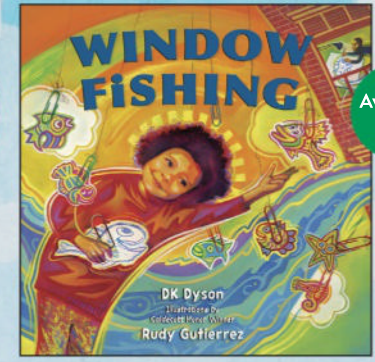
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My Baba's Garden
Jordan Scott
Sydney Smith

school; on rainy days, they collect worms to add to Baba's garden. She doesn't speak much English, but the two communicate through gestures, food, and the loving bond they share. Smith's evocative watercolor-and-gouache illustrations are rendered in a primitive style, reminiscent of paintings a young child might create. He uses grays, greens, and blues predominantly, effectively representing the rainy climate of British Columbia's southwest coast, where the story is set. Facial features are often abbreviated or lacking, and most edges are blurred, suggesting that memory is not always 20/20. The details of Baba's house (garden produce in every nook and cranny, photos from the old country, sunlight streaming through her kitchen window) and garden encourage extended viewing, as will tender, quiet moments between the two characters. When Baba's home is razed, she moves to Jordan's house. Much changes (no garden, no daily walks) but the grandparent-child bond remains strong. Share this heartfelt testament to family widely. —*Kay Weisman*

"Soul-searching, cautionary realism."
Young Adult Fiction

Beauty Reborn
Elizabeth Lowham

A retelling of *Beauty and the Beast* about healing from the trauma of emotional and sexual abuse through the lens of a well-known fairy tale. The story explores the difficulty of learning to trust again as well as noting that the road to empowerment is an on-going journey, not a simple "happily ever after" ending.

9781639931064/$19.99/HC/ YA (May)

"This retelling of *Beauty and the Beast* adds a #MeToo backstory. Suspense-building flashbacks. Soul-searching, cautionary realism. Beauty herself is an intriguing, well-crafted original, her story building on the tale's perennial theme of consent: She goes willingly to a Beast who does not force her into marriage though his life and humanity depend on it. In that respect, this iteration does not disappoint. Readers who appreciate narrative risk-taking are well served."—*Kirkus*

"I wish I could say no teenage girl needs a heroine familiar with trauma of this nature, but the truth is I needed one. I can only hope Beauty's story will offer comfort to anyone who needs it and I hope it can be a resource for any educator or librarian who finds themselves in a position to help a struggling young woman."—author, Elizabeth Lowham.

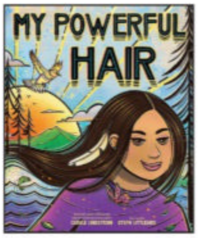
Watch her full author video on YouTube or via our Edelweiss catalog.

Shadow Mountain Publishing
Request a review copy on Edelweiss or NetGalley

My Powerful Hair.

By Carole Lindstrom. Illus. by Steph Littlebird.

Mar. 2023. 48p. Abrams, $18.99 (9781419759437). PreS–Gr. 2.



Caldecott author Lindstrom (Turtle Mountain Ojibwe) here celebrates the importance of hair to Indigenous cultures. Although her mother and grandmother have chosen to keep their hair short, this young protagonist cannot wait for her hair to grow long. She connects specific memories to her hair length: touching her ears when Nimishoomis (Grandfather) teaches her to fish; shoulder length when her brother is born; past her shoulders when she learns to make moccasins; and the middle of her back when she dances at Pow Wow. She shares traditional knowledge articulating that hair contains stories and memories, gives strength, and celebrates relationships. Noting the custom of cutting hair when a loved one dies, she further posits that hair is a living scrapbook. Littlebird's (Oregon Tribes of the Grand Ronde) pencil-and-digital art features simple shapes, flowing lines, and a palette of purples, turquoise, and greens, accented in yellow. With backgrounds suggesting wood grain and thickly outlined shapes throughout, the illustrations evoke woodcuts and give the presentation a timeless feel. Appended with an author's note that poignantly explains why haircutting at Indian residential schools was so traumatic, this makes a thoughtful and enlightening addition to the picture book shelves and a worthy choice for units on Indigenous cultures. —*Kay Weisman*

Nana and Abuela.

By Monica Rojas. Illus. by Emiko Rainbow.

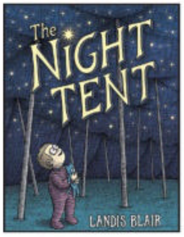
Mar. 2023. 32p. Minnesota Historical Society, $17.95 (9781681342542). K–Gr. 2.

When Luna's parents head out on a date and her two favorite people, Nana and Abuela, come to babysit her, she is excited to spend the night with her beloved grandmothers and their respective cultures and mannerisms. Rojas' lighthearted text, paired with Rainbow's lively illustrations, follows the adventures of bilingual Luna as she enjoys quality time with her English-speaking Nana and Spanish-speaking Abuela, but when Luna begins using her own form of Spanglish, Abuela and Nana need to listen carefully to understand her. This sweet story, visualized through a warm palette and lots of movement, explores the experience of growing up multilingual and sharing love for grandparents of different heritages while still celebrating what makes Luna unique—her own language that she has crafted to bring together the best of both sides of her family. Luna, Nana, and Abuela have a fabulous night in, thanks to an open mind, a listening ear, and a list of Luna's words that her supportive parents put together. —*Stephanie Cohen*

★ The Night Tent.

By Landis Blair. Illus. by the author.

Apr. 2023. 40p. Holiday/Margaret Ferguson, $18.99 (9780823450985). PreS–Gr. 1.



Blair serves us a gentler take on *Where the Wild Things Are* in his blue-toned tale of a sleepless boy's nighttime adventure. With thoughts of tentacles and closet monsters dancing in his head, Watson's round eyes are as open as can be, despite him being tucked into a cozy bed. Just as a wish to be "anywhere else but here" flits through his head, a light glows from beneath his blanket. He tentatively lifts the blanket and discovers an entirely new world, its pillowy, star-studded sky propped up by long sticks. The stars illuminate a winding path, which Watson—cat stuffie in hand—begins to follow because he's not sleepy after all. Odd, charming details unfold as Watson wanders through the slumberland, cast in teals, mauve, and deep indigo and shaded with crosshatching, where he discovers a forest populated by strange (but friendly!) creatures. The journey becomes increasingly fantastic as the boy ventures on, becoming ever more tired in the process. Eventually, he crawls from beneath the night tent and back into his bed, where he falls immediately to sleep. The artwork in this imaginative bedtime tale will captivate little ones with its peculiar, dreamlike details. It also sidesteps being scary, offering comfort in the wonders that the night can bring. —*Julia Smith*

Ode to a Bad Day.

By Chelsea Lin Wallace. Illus. by Hyewon Yum.

Apr. 2023. 48p. Chronicle, $16.99 (9781797210803). PreS–Gr. 2.

This riff on Judith Viorst's celebrated *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* shows a dramatic little girl complaining all the way through a day filled with mishaps, starting with too much milk in her cereal. The humor comes from the girl's overreactions and the way the watercolor and colored-pencil illustrations chronicle her struggles with things like getting on her tights and having hiccups in class. The "ode" structure shows in the way each section starts with the girl addressing each part of the day and its many frustrations, as in "Oh Bad Morning" and "Oh you Clothes," as well as in the rhyming format. The little girl lurches from soggy cereal to uncooperative clothes to a day at school that includes a kid who cuts in line and a pudding cup missing from her lunch. After school, she's bored at the store and faceplants in her slimy spaghetti. At book's end, "annoyed . . . / but not destroyed," she realizes tomorrow may be better. A bit one-note, but engaging. —*Connie Fletcher*

One Day.

By Joanna Ho. Illus. by Faith Pray.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Harper, $18.99 (9780063056923). PreS–Gr. 1.

A mother's aspirations for her infant son are revealed in Ho's loving words and Pray's colorful illustrations, created using pencils, ink, watercolor, linoleum block prints, and Adobe Photoshop. The free-verse poem is narrated by a young mother to her "sweet boy." As the mother and son spend a day together from his rising until bedtime, she and the pictures convey what she believes he will learn and experience as he grows up. The words "one day" are repeated throughout as the new parent voices her desires for her son: "I hope," "I imagine," "I'm sure," "I dream," and "I know." Metaphors and similes pepper the lyrical text: "Your cheek is a pillow / pressed to my face / as we watch ourselves dance / in the mirror." The large illustrations stretch from margin to margin and reveal varying perspectives and movement, from flowing hair to billowing curtains to waves crashing along a shoreline.

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The heartfelt title will be welcomed by new parents as the narrator voices the universal dream of wishing the best in life for their newborn. —*Maryann Owen*

A Pigeon in Paris: Petite Takes Flight.

By Paige Howard. Illus. by Joanie Stone.

Apr. 2023. 32p. Sleeping Bear, $18.99 (9781534111820). PreS–Gr. 2.

A mother pigeon excitedly informs her children, Cherie, Bisou, and Petite, that it is time to learn to fly. Cherie and Bisou are elated, delightedly flinging themselves free of the nest and taking to the sky over Paris. Petite approaches the rim, stretches her wings, prepares to jump—and can't commit, fleeing back to the cozy interior. Her mother lets her stay in the nest, and her siblings eventually return for a snuggly night's rest. As days pass and the timid hatchling finds other excuses for staying put, including a foggy morning that she deems impossible flying weather. Mama explains that there will be all kinds of weather, some good and some bad, and that Petite must embrace the challenges, gather her courage, and leap, so Petite takes a deep breath and soars at last. It's a marvelous message for young readers facing uncertainty, with a beautiful balance struck between the mother's compassion and ultimate insistence on leaving the comfort zone. Soft-pastel illustrations of wide-eyed birds, snug nests, and splendid spring blossoms are equally charming and comforting. —*Emily Graham*

Quiet Time with My Seeya.

By Dinalie Dabarera. Illus. by the author.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Roaring Brook, $18.99 (9781250824271). K–Gr. 2.

A child and their grandfather (*seeya* in Sinhalese) share a loving bond despite the language barrier between them. Narrated by the child, the story depicts the many ways they enjoy spending time together. They read, tend to the garden, play on the beach, play dress-up, and much more. Their smiling faces leave no doubt as to the depth of their connection. The illustrations parallel the narrative, adding details and humorous twists that will make readers smile along with the characters. It soon becomes clear that the word *quiet* in the title refers only to language, as the pair of them are never at a loss for laughter, exclamations, and other sounds. This will resonate with intergenerational families in which linguistic and cultural differences may be an obstacle for communication—at least on the surface. In the back matter, the author shares her own story, making this lovely book a welcome addition to the growing canon of immigrant stories for children. Can be thematically paired with *Grandpa's Scroll* by Ginger Park and Frances Park (2023). —*Amina Chaudhri*

Tadpoles.

By Matt James. Illus. by the author.

May 2023. 40p. Holiday/Neal Porter, $18.99 (9780823450053); e-book, $11.99 (9780823455478). Gr. 1–3.

In an engaging stream of seemingly random ruminations, a child thinks about frogs and clouds and then describes a field—once a garbage dump, now filled with old junk—where long rains leave what his dad calls an "ephemeral pond," in which frog eggs hatch into tadpoles. One day, after he watches the tadpoles for a long time, he sees them as afterimages on the sidewalk and even in the sky! In the splashy illustrations, a lad in a yellow raincoat and rubber boots rambles alone or with his parent through grassy puddles, nets a bucket full of tadpoles (then pours them back into the pond), and walks home smiling beneath heavy, tadpole-strewn clouds. Along with a personal reminiscence, James closes with notes on ephemeral ponds and the surprising number of small creatures that are dependent on them, so besides being fun to read either alone or aloud, this has an informational character. —*John Peters*

To the Other Side.

By Erika Meza. Illus. by the author.

Mar. 2023. 40p. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen, $18.99 (9780063073166). K–Gr. 2.

This poignant and haunting illustrated

Guess what happens when Milo encounters the GREEN-EYED MONSTER OF JEALOUSY?

"Sure to help young readers recognize—and reconcile with—their own green-eyed monsters."
–KIRKUS REVIEWS

A warm and uplifting new addition to Tom Percival's BIG BRIGHT FEELINGS series!

The BIG BRIGHT FEELINGS picture book series provides kid-friendly entry points into emotional intelligence topics.

tale follows two siblings as they embark on a treacherous journey to find a new home beyond the borders of their homeland. With most of the visuals employing grayscale watercolor punctuated with vibrant, almost otherworldly masks worn by the children, the focus here is on escaping the horrors and stressors of one's homeland and pursuing hope and happiness in a new world. The protagonist comes to find the journey, which begins as a "game," tiring and frightening, but his older sister keeps him emotionally buoyant and supported. Meza's emotional text and memorable illustrations are inspired by the stories she learned of immigrant and refugee children and infused with her own personal experiences as a child who migrated and moved around a lot, searching for a place to feel truly like home. What begins as a game for young migrants to "cross the line" turns into a sometimes traumatic, sometimes wondrous adventure that readers will be compelled to mull over in their minds. —*Stephanie Cohen*

What to Bring.

By Lorna Schultz Nicholson. Illus. by Ellen Rooney.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Owlkids, $18.95 (9781771474900).
PreS–Gr. 2.

Malia is playing in her yard when a dark cloud of smoke blooms on the horizon; soon, flames lick a nearby hillside. Her family must "leave the house, just to be safe," but Malia struggles with what to bring when they evacuate. Daddy rules out her tree fort, and Mama declines piles of books and toys from Malia's room, gently narrowing Malia's choices. "Three things," says Mama. "And put the rest in your heart." As her parents drive Malia, her sibling, and their pets to Grandpa's, Malia's worried expression shifts to a small smile. The family is together, and "Malia knows she brought what is important." A scary subject is addressed sensitively here and, in the absence of geographic or temporal markers, leaves room for use with other natural disasters or evacuations. Cheerful, textured artwork softens the subject's intensity and supports the child-centered text, while details such as boxed photos and Malia's height marked on a doorway prompt thoughtful conversations around material possessions and cherished memories. A gentle story that affirms big feelings and prioritizes relationships. —*Kit Ballenger*

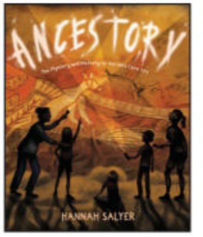
Nonfiction

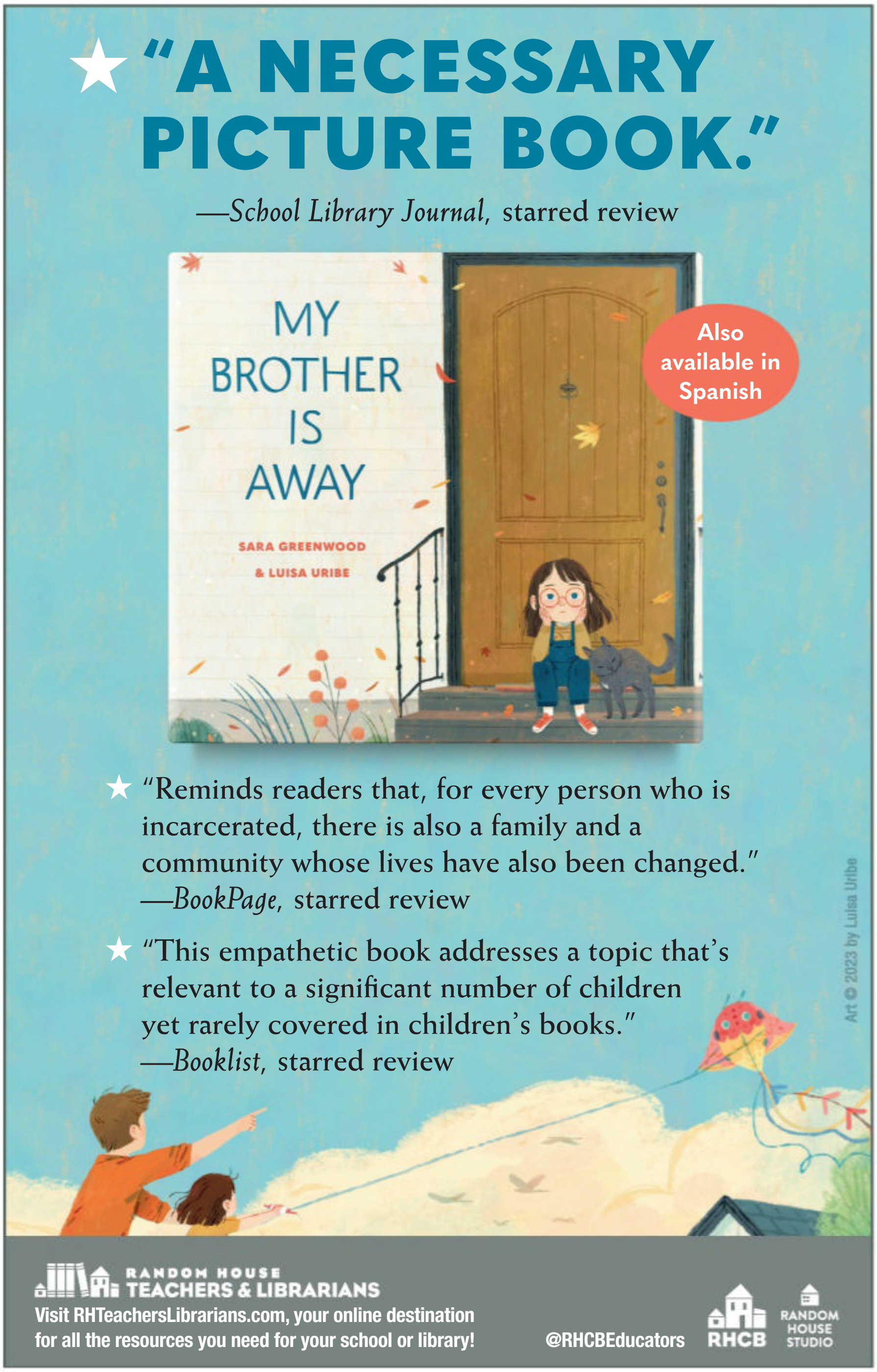
★ Ancestory: The Mystery and Majesty of Ancient Cave Art.

By Hannah Salyer. Illus. by the author.

Apr. 2023. 48p. Clarion, $19.99 (9780358469841).
K–Gr. 3. 759.

This nonfiction picture book illuminates the wonders and splendors of prehistoric cave and rock paintings around the world. A reverence and respect shines through Salyer's informative and graceful text: "Each handprint, marking, color, and material had a purpose. It took an enormous effort to make each piece." There are many mysteries surrounding ancient pictographs, and this book thoughtfully considers questions of who made them, how, and why. Breathtaking illustrations created in ceramic sculpture, photography, colored pencil, charcoal, pigment, and digital media capture the beauty and power of prehistoric artwork with remarkable precision. One stunning wordless spread offers an expansive and immersive lantern-lit view of the paintings covering the walls inside Lascaux caves. The importance of protecting and preserving these "distant memories in stone of what came before us" is emphasized throughout, along with referencing and honoring Indigenous communities who "still have distant familiarity with these ancient sites and stories." Extensive back matter offers a deeper archaeological dig into the topic, sharing print, website, and podcast resources for further investigation. With an inviting, inquisitive tone, this look at early human

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imagination and storytelling encourages the intrinsic drive to create: "The outlines of this shared story are old, but they are still being drawn. Even now, the story is unfolding all around you." This luminous picture book about humanity's shared stories is full of discoveries. —*Linda Ludke*

Birds Everywhere.

By Camilla de la Bedoyere. Illus. by Britta Teckentrup.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Candlewick/Big Picture, $17.99 (9781536229738). Gr. 1–3. 598.

Birds present an astonishing range of colors, sizes, and behaviors, and though no book can cover the incredible variety, this one gamely gives it a go, packing an impressive amount of diversity into a slim survey of the subject. After a crash course in basic bird biology humorously titled "It's a bird! (So what *is* that?)," readers are whisked along an evolutionary trail before the more in-depth studies begin. Birds from every continent are included, and while topics are mostly general (flight, feeding habits, courtship rituals), a few species are treated to more thorough investigations. The spectacular spreads are broken up into colored text boxes and have "Can you find it?" challenges sprinkled throughout, keeping the audience engrossed and entertained. The lively digital illustrations are glorious; younger readers will delight in the riot of color and movement, older children will find a wealth of astonishing facts, and all ages will discover new details upon every further examination. A sensational introduction to the weird and wonderful world of birds. —*Emily Graham*

Chef Edna: Queen of Southern Cooking, Edna Lewis.

By Melvina Noel. Illus. by Cozbi A. Cabrera.

Apr. 2023. 32p. Cameron Kids, $18.99 (9781951836399). K–Gr. 3. 641.59.

This picture-book biography celebrates the life of Edna Lewis, queen of Southern cooking. Edna grew up in Virginia, milking the cows, chasing the chickens, and learning how to cook from her mama. At 15, she moved to New York City and became a seamstress. Soon she was famous for her clothes—both those she made for movie stars and the traditional African outfits she created for herself. But Edna's real love was cooking. She missed the family gatherings back home, so she started cooking, Southern-style, for her city friends. This led to a restaurant and other ventures that won numerous awards. The wonderfully detailed illustrations create vivid scenarios that help impart an overall tone of warm hospitality and celebration, shown outdoors at a picnic table in Virginia or in Edna's ritzy restaurant on the Upper East Side. Back matter includes an author's note, sources, and a recipe for Edna's biscuits. This tribute to a dedicated champion of traditional Southern food and culture makes a wonderful read-aloud. —*Kathleen McBroom*

Hank on First! How Hank Greenberg Became a Star On and Off the Field.

By Stephen Krensky. Illus. by Allette Straathof.

Mar. 2023. 32p. Behrman/Apples & Honey, $17.95 (9781681155999). Gr. 1–3. 796.357.

In this profile of our country's first openly Jewish sports star, Krensky takes future Hall of Famer Hank Greenberg from childhood sandlots to his first World Series, casting him as the hero he was not for his baseball feats (which go unlisted here) but for "staying true to his beliefs"—bearing up under both heavy barrages of antisemitic trash talk from fans and opposing players and the silent lack of support from his teammates (particularly after his refusal to play on Yom Kippur in 1934). While the crowds of shouting fans with contorted, angry faces in Straathof's illustrations aren't limited to white hecklers, the biographical afterword points out that Greenberg's example stood, and still stands, as inspirational for all players experiencing racial or religious prejudice. Greenberg ultimately played an active role in recruiting and welcoming Black players into the Major League, and for readers curious about that

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(or, for that matter, his career stats and on-field achievements), this could be paired with Cathy Fishman's *When Jackie and Hank Met* (2012) or any of the several available longer biographies. —*John Peters*

In Between.

By April Pulley Sayre. Illus. by the author.

Mar. 2023. 40p. Simon & Schuster/Beach Lane, $18.99 (9781534487819). PreS–Gr. 1. 590.

Using succinct, poetic text and her signature close-up nature photography, Sayre explores awkward transitional moments experienced by all animals. "Every creature on Earth at times finds itself in between. / In between boulders, in between branches. In between blueberry rows. / In between inside and outside, / day and night." The crisp, full-color photographs are particularly appropriate to the lyrical text: baby birds nestle snugly between barn rafters, a raccoon clings to trees growing side by side, turkeys stroll between blueberry bushes. Perhaps most impressive are the shots that depict motion and change: a tiny chickadee grasps a leafless winter branch and finally lets go, taking flight; a recently molted dragonfly pauses to dry; and a pink spoonbill launches and glides away. Unspoken throughout is the idea that while changing states may feel uncertain, it allows for endings and new beginnings. More contemplative than scientific in tone (the animals are not identified), this perceptive and reassuring offering will be welcomed by in-betweeners and the late Sayre's many fans. —*Kay Weisman*

Isabel and the Invisible World.

By Alan Lightman. Illus. by Ramona Kaulitzki.

Apr. 2023. 40p. Candlewick/MIT Kids, $18.99 (9781536223330). PreS–Gr. 1. 535.

Isabel, a multiracial girl from a family with varying skin colors and hairstyles and who loves colorful polka dots, has always wanted to see invisible things, much like her friend Genevieve, who walks an invisible pet rabbit. As Isabel's sixth birthday approaches, her scientist mother has an idea for a special present that will help her achieve her wish. But first, there are fun birthday posters and party hats to make. Finally, on the big day, Isabel receives a prism and her mother explains how it separates the invisible colors of light. Softly rendered digital art not only sets a playful tone but offers plenty of hints about light and prisms to find before and after reading, from streaming sunlight to stained-glass windows to rainbows in confetti, cakes, and Isabel's birthday posters. An up-close image also demonstrates the prism at work, while a concluding note explains how light travels in waves and how the human eye can't see some kinds of light waves, like radio waves. A charming, breezy introduction to STEM basics. —*Angela Leeper*

Louise Bourgeois Made Giant Spiders and Wasn't Sorry.

By Fausto Gilberti. Illus. by the author.

Apr. 2023. 48p. Phaidon, $17.95 (9781838666248). Gr. 1–3. 730.92.

Louise Bourgeois' famous giant spider sculptures seem like something out of science fiction. But all of the artist's life, not just the giant arachnid sculptures she created that are now outside museums worldwide, was inspired by her mother, who was a weaver (just like a spider). Born on Christmas Day in 1911, so the afterword tells us, Louise was brought up in an artistic home, helping her mother to draw the missing parts of tapestries that needed repair and becoming inspired by other family tableaux, such as when her father hung old chairs in the attic. When Louise's mother died, the 20-year-old artist was heartbroken, but "art gave her comfort. It helped her mend her broken heart." This theme of art as healer, coupled with an easy-to-follow story and black-and-white images that are somber and playful all at once (Louise and family look like round, pitch-black, cheerful spider-people), makes this unusual work a great choice where bibliotherapy titles are in demand as well as a valuable introduction to a lesser-covered artist for this age group. —*Henrietta Verma*

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SCAN TO VIEW OUR CATALOG!

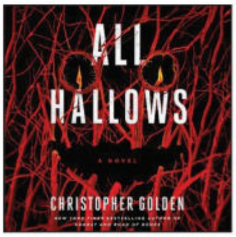
Audio

Adult

★ All Hallows.

By Christopher Golden. Read by Ronnie Butler and January LaVoy.

2023. 11hr. Orange Sky Audio, DD (9781667076034).



Bram Stoker Award–winning author Golden returns with a 1980s throwback tale that has vibes of both early Stephen King and the TV show *Stranger Things*. On Halloween night in 1984 on a relatively quiet street in Massachusetts, families prepare for trick-or-treating, Halloween parties, and an annual haunted forest, yet something sinister is about to affect everyone. Unknown children in vintage makeup and costumes appear and start pleading with the neighborhood kids to hide them from "The Cunning Man." Golden is at his best in *All Hallows*. Butler and LaVoy narrate this slow burn with precise temperament and just a hint of edge to enhance the uneasiness of the story. The duo make a good pairing and they complement each other well. There's nothing scarier than when the terror is literally in your own backyard. Horror fans will love this audio version, as will readers of Joe Hill, Paul Tremblay, and Adam Cesare. —*Shellie Zeigler*

Bad Cree.

By Jessica Johns. Read by Tanis Parenteau.

2023. 8hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593628140).

"Murder" here refers not so much to killing but to the hordes of crows that haunt Mackenzie, a questioningly self-proclaimed "bad Cree" who can't seem to escape the avian invasions in her dreams that increasingly appear in real life. Her story opens as she wakes one morning holding a crow's detached head—that other murder. The nightmares grow more intense. Her vision isn't dependable. Her cell phone has a mind of its own. When she can no longer deny insistent warnings, she agrees to return to her rural Alberta hometown to face her estranged family and the legacy of her sister Sabrina's mysterious death. Debut author Johns, who shares Indigenous Alberta roots with her protagonist, is serendipitously matched with Alberta-born-and-raised Plains Cree–descended actor Parenteau. With deliberate determination, Parenteau takes immediate control of Johns' otherworldly narrative, making the impossible and incomprehensible utterly believable. Most memorable are her warm portrayals of the wise, protective aunties—especially unmarried Auntie Verna, with her Walmart bins and Vegas proclivities, who might be the most persuasive parent of them all. —*Terry Hong*

The Dance Tree.

By Kiran Millwood Hargrave. Read by Ruta Gedmintas.

Mar. 2023. 9hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063274808).

British actress Ruta Gedmintas delivers an understated narration of this atmospheric, historical novel, Hargrave's second effort after *The Mercies*. Inspired by real-life events of a dancing craze, the story takes place during the hot summer of 1518 in Strasbourg, France. Just beyond the city's limits lives pregnant Lisbet with her husband and mother-in-law. Lisbet has suffered several miscarriages and is determined to carry this baby to full term. Her best friend, Ida, visits regularly and one day, Lisbet's sister-in-law, Nethe, returns home after doing seven years of penance for an unknown crime. Meanwhile, in the city center, women begin to dance until they collapse, with more and more women joining in the frenzy. Hargrave's rich details and lyrical writing are rendered in an unhurried, somber manner by Gedmintas, matching the story's slow-burning development. While Gedmintas captures the celebration of female friendships well, the voices of the different characters are not highly distinguishable. Nevertheless, fans of historical fiction, especially stories with lush writing and unique settings, may find this an intriguing listen. —*Van McGary*

Podcast Connection

You Just Need to Lose Weight and 19 Other Myths about Fat People.

By Aubrey Gordon. Read by the author.

2023. 7hr. Beacon, DD (9780807006818).

Well-known podcaster Aubrey Gordon debunks societal assumptions about the lives and experiences of fat people in her second offering examining anti-fatness. Gordon discredits common and accepted societal understandings, like the BMI, the obesity epidemic, and the belief that losing weight is simple and easy. Listeners of the *Maintenance Phase* podcast will welcome Gordon's warm vocal presence as she tactfully details misconceptions. Gordon varies pace and tone as she moves between personal experiences and specific arguments. More detailed text is easily understood as Gordon effectively slows her pace to show emphasis and keeps listeners engaged with the work. Each section concludes with reflection questions for listeners to analyze their own relationships with each myth. Gordon's ability to teach and thoroughly explain is evident throughout. Listeners who pursue works on society, health, and human rights movements will appreciate Gordon's thoughtful narration. —*Michelle Kilty*

A Death in Tokyo.

By Keigo Higashino. Tr. by Giles Murray. Read by P. J. Ochlan.

2022. 9.5hr. Tantor, DD (9798765020463).

Consistency could actually be too much of a good thing as Ochlan returns for the third of internationally best-selling Higashino's Stateside-available Kyoichiro Kaga series. His last Higashino pairing was Kaga, Book 2—*Newcomer*. Ochlan has another sizable cast to distinguish as Higashino superbly plots another didn't-see-that-coming thriller. A Tokyo businessman is fatally stabbed; his wallet and briefcase are found with a young man who lies comatose after being hit by a car. While the crime might seem obviously solved, Kaga isn't sure. Working with his detective cousin, Kaga reaches out to the victim's family and the suspect's girlfriend to uncover another satisfying truth listeners won't have guessed. So here's the good news: Ochlan is comfortably convincing as brilliantly observant, understated Kaga, he's remarkably facile shifting genders and situations, and his Japanese continues to improve. What's notably less successful, especially for repeat Higashino/Ochlan audiences, is Ochlan's relentless sing-songy, rhythmic affectation at the end of every few sentences, which effectively negates his otherwise carefully individuated characterizations. Despite this, Higashino's addictively intriguing machinations should be enough to keep audiences carefully tuned in. —*Terry Hong*

The Drift.

By C. J. Tudor. Read by a full cast.

2023. 11hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593452837).

C. J. Tudor's *The Drift* is an exceptionally written, taut, apocalyptic story of survival, mystery, and conspiracy. The story incorporates elements of thrillers, mysteries, and even horror with incredible skill, and adds fantastic set pieces that lend the story both an atmospheric dread and thrilling action. Both the book and narration cut between three story lines and locations, with a narrator for each of our protagonists: Hannah, Meg, and Carter (Nathalie Buscombe, Rachel Handshaw, and Richard Armitage). Each narrator expertly embodies the voice of their character, giving life to the shifting points of view and style of their individual sections. Savvy listeners may detect that the audio is recorded in noticeably different environments—possibly a distraction in another work but here actually serving to enhance the changing settings and giving the audio version an extra atmospheric edge. Otherwise the audio is crisp and well produced. A great listen! —*Adam Schulmerich*

Booklist

Listen Up

Atmospheric Accents

by Heather Booth

Art from ***The Lying Life of Adults.***

Listening to an audiobook set in a distant locale can create a sensory backdrop for travel or offer an armchair-travel opportunity. The stellar accent work here will take you away and vibrantly create a sense of place and time.

All the Devils Are Here. By Louise Penny. Read by Robert Bathurst. 2020. 14hr. Macmillan, DD (9781250760616).

Deep into the Inspector Gamache series, Bathurst knows his characters by heart. His narration in this Paris-set mystery is a treat as he leans into the international setting with a range of accents. Each character is subtlety but distinctly voiced, showing the commonalities among the accents as well as the differences.

Berlin Exchange. By Joseph Kanon. Read by Jonathan Davis. 2022. 10.5hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797129877).

International spy-thrillers are an excellent place to find superb accent work. Here, an American scientist is released from British custody to the Communists in Cold War-era Berlin. Davis offers authentic, consistent accents for the mix of American, German, and Russian characters and maintains the tension and emotions for a man caught in a web of secrets.

Bindle Punk Bruja. By Desideria Mesa. Read by Frankie Corzo. 2022. 14hr. HarperAudio, DD (9780063056107).

Reporter by day, Roaring Twenties speakeasy manager by night, white-presenting Rose is also Luna, a Mexican earth-witch. Corzo pinpoints the tension of Luna/Rose's internal struggle and code-switching, using period intonations and slang to invoke the rhythms of the era.

The Girl with the Louding Voice. By Abi Daré. Read by Adjoa Andoh. 2020. 12hr. Books on Tape (9780593168738).

Young Adduni is an abused third wife in rural Nigeria whose fortune changes, then changes again as she journeys to Lagos as a housemaid and then gains an education. Andoh's talent for accents vividly illuminates a journey through locales and social classes.

Honor. By Thrity Umrigar. Read by Sneha Mathan. 2022. 11.5hr. Workman, DD (9781649040787).

In a remote Indian village, a young Hindu widow has gone public with the heinous crimes she's survived. Accents, genders, ages, backgrounds, and emotions abound, but Mathan embraces diverse characterizations with effortless ease.

Iron Annie. By Luke Cassidy. Read by Eleanor McLoughlin. 2022. 8.5hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593554838).

Cassidy's debut is a caper wrapped in a tangled love story, rich with a sense of place—mainly the north of Ireland, but also London and a smattering of English towns—and infused with the slang of its settings. Narrator McLoughlin's audiobook debut is one for the ages.

The Lying Life of Adults. By Elena Ferrante. Read by Marisa Tomei. 2020. 10.5hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593340882)

For this incisive coming-of-age story set in 1970s Italy that confronts the wounding power of family and the stomach-clenching passion of first love, Tomei easily slides into a range of Italian cadences and pronunciations to express the various dialects that fill Giovanna's world.

The Passenger. By Cormac McCarthy. Read by Julia Whelan and MacLeod Andrews. 2022. 12.5hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780739368787).

In McCarthy's expansive and meditative tale, Andrews pinpoints numerous Louisiana accents as Bobby Western, while Whelan's masterful interludes switch seamlessly between his sister, Alicia, and the rough-talking, Chicago-accented apparition who haunts her.

Empire of Ice and Stone: The Disastrous and Heroic Voyage of the Karluk.

By Buddy Levy. Read by Will Damron.

2022. 14.5hr. Macmillan Audio, DD (9781250870612).

In 1913 the wood-hulled brigantine *Karluk* set sail under the Canadian flag to explore the Arctic region and seek the North Pole. Less than two months into the journey, the ship became ice-bound and eventually was crushed by the powerful Arctic ice and sank. The sailing party, including an Inuit mother and her two young daughters, would struggle to survive on the ice with what they had managed to salvage from the ship before its sinking. The entire expedition was beset with heroism, tragedy, high hopes, and great disappointment, and Damron's able narration carries listeners through this arduous journey with a steady tone that lightens at moments of joy and becomes grave at times of deep sadness and loss. While the tale has all of the trappings of a great adventure novel, neither the author nor Damron let listeners forget that the toll here was real, human, and significant. An excellent addition to nonfiction audio collections and an easy pick for fans of other tales of survival or historical intrigue like Jennifer Niven's *The Ice Master* (2000) or Erik Larson's *Dead Wake* (2015). *—Heather Booth*

The Good Life: Lessons from the World's Longest Scientific Study of Happiness.

By Robert Waldinger and Marc Schulz. Read by the authors.

2023. 11hrs. Simon & Schuster Audio, CD, $28.74 (9781797149318).

Psychologists Waldinger and Schulz sift through years of data from Harvard's extensive longitudinal lifestyle study, which tracked the lives of over 700 participants from the Boston area in search of the secret to a good life. Beginning in 1938, Harvard students and a selection of teens from the inner-city area were questioned about their health, relationships, and emotional status. Every two years they filled out surveys; every fifteen years a researcher conducted a personal interview. Eventually, input from spouses and children was included. The authors read alternating chapters covering survey topics and the responses of the participants. Background information on the subjects are included and changes in their lives are put into perspective. Waldinger reads in a sincere, comfortable, clear tone. Schulz answers with a deeper, authoritative sound. Both speak clearly and

New Picture Books on Audio

All Rise: The Story of Ketanji Brown Jackson.
By Carole Boston Weatherford. Read by the author.

2023. .25hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593746196). Gr. 1–3.

Through each step in her life, Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson has risen to challenges and to higher levels of success. This picture-book biography is plainly narrated by the author, which makes the text and the story of Jackson's inspirational life accessible to a wide range of readers. Weatherford reads with conviction at a well-paced speed which will allow listeners to easily follow along with the book if they have it in hand. The audio is presented without musical background or sound effects to stand in for illustrations, but the story is clear and straightforward, so the unadorned narration is entirely suitable. Notable for a picture-book audio is the inclusion of the time line of Jackson's life, which is read in its entirety. As the landmark first Black woman on the Supreme Court, Jackson is a figure of note, and this audio biography provides youngsters with another way to connect to and find inspiration in her life story. —*Heather Booth*

Calvin.
By J R Ford and Vanessa Ford. Read by Vittorio Wyatt Gray.

2023. CD (9781666624229). K–Gr. 2.

Calvin has always known he is a boy "in my heart and in my brain," and decides to finally tell his parents—who see him as a girl—this news before a summer trip to visit his grandparents. His family supports and affirms him, and Calvin relishes the freedom and joy he feels. Simple but significant changes at home, out and about, in his appearance, and at school illustrate the ways his community works to make Calvin feel comfortable and valued. Gray uses a soft and reassuring voice for the narration. For Calvin's spoken words and dialogue with other kids, his tone elevates to a childlike pitch. When Calvin speaks, he is firm in articulating his feelings, and Gray's voicing illustrates Calvin's appreciation for gestures like his school cubby and table reflecting his real name. Without accompanying illustrations, music conveys the mood of the story, which is sweet and upbeat. Notes at the end inform listeners of best practices, based on research and the authors' personal experience, in supporting children with gender transitions. —*Heather Booth*

★ Good Night, Body: Finding Calm from Head to Toe.
By Britney Winn Lee. Read by the author.

2023. .5hr. Tommy Nelson, DD (9781400238576). PreS–Gr. 3.

GOOD NIGHT Body
FINDING CALM FROM HEAD TO TOE

Each of us has a home that takes care of us and that we can take care of too: our body! This gentle, approachable text that guides appreciation and relaxation for everything from our fingers to our toes is read by the author. Lee, a pastor and author from Shreveport, Louisiana, begins by explaining how the audiobook might be used in conjunction with the print or on its own and reminds listeners that they can adapt the exercises to the needs of their own bodies. Then she uses a guided meditation technique called a body scan to encourage children to relax each bit of their body, from arms to lips to tummies. A deep-breathing exercise followed by 30 minutes of gentle, spa-like music are unique to the audio, and are lovely ways to ease young listeners into sleep. While the pace of the narration feels faster than one might expect for a bedtime meditation, it will keep little ones engaged in the activities. This is an excellent use of the audio format to extend the impact of a picture book. —*Heather Booth*

We Are Here.
By Tami Charles and Bryan Collier. Read by Tami Charles.

2023. 16min. Scholastic, DD (9781339004792).

Best-selling author and SCBWI Golden Kite recipient for her picture book *All Because You Matter* Tami Charles delivers another anthem and love letter to Black and brown children with *We Are Here*. Narrated by the author, this is a lyrical journey flowing and layered with joy and hope. Jazz permeates the soundscape and Charles' voice is captivating as her words affirm and uplift the myriad experiences of Black and brown people throughout history and into the future. The audio, when paired with the picture book illustrated by Coretta Scott King Award–winner and Caldecott Recipient Bryan Collier, will be an excellent addition to classrooms, libraries, and homes that aim to inspire curiosity and further exploration of the themes of heritage and positive self-identity. —*Tracy Ramey*

intelligently, making the data and stories easy to follow. The result is a map to life stages and a guideline for listeners to evaluate their own lives. Spoiler alert: the secret to a good life lies in solid relationships. —*Candace Smith*

The House in the Pines.
By Ana Reyes. Read by Marisol Ramirez.

2023. 8.5hr. Books on Tape, DD (9780593626658).

When Maya sees a YouTube video of a young woman seated at a diner who slumps and suddenly dies, she realizes that it seems familiar. Years ago her best friend, Aubrey, died in similar circumstances. She, too, was seated with the same man: Maya's former boyfriend, Frank. Maya is convinced that Frank committed both crimes, but it's not easy to convince the authorities. Maya isn't the most reliable of witnesses. She's addicted to both drugs and alcohol, and her history with Frank includes mysterious blackouts and missing moments at Frank's house in the woods. As the plot moves back and forth in time, a picture emerges of a charming but controlling man who snares young, vulnerable women, and Maya's desperate plans to understand just what's going on and stop him. Reader Ramirez does a good job keeping control of the action. Some of the threads lead back to Maya's father, who died in Guatemala, and Ramirez slips easily between English, Spanish, and some fractured attempts to speak each language. It's a frightening premise, and listeners will be glued to their headphones. —*Candace Smith*

In the Time of Our History.
By Susanne Pari. Read by Mozhan Marnò.

2023. 12hr. HighBridge, DD (9781696610513).

In 1981, Mitra Jahani radically and decisively extricated herself from the debilitating expectations of her Iranian-American upbringing in New Jersey. Now it's 1998, and on Mitra's return home, secrets are revealed and relationships redefined in this exploration of identity, family, and belonging in the Iranian diaspora. Iranian American actor Marnò seamlessly teases the lyrical language off the page, transporting the listener into the lives of the Jahanis. Mitra's defiance and moments of pause as she reenters her father's domain are palpable. The subtle tensions of strength and resignation color Shireen as dutiful wife, grieving mother, and persistent mediator who navigates traditions to make her voice heard. Marnò's measured pacing, gentle tone, and perceptive inflections turn the novel into a poem, especially during the character interludes woven throughout that elicit the experiences and History that shape the Jahani's world. Marnò's agility with accents adds fluidity and realism to the dialogues across various ethnic and national Persian, U.S., and British backgrounds. Recommended for fans of Laila Lalami's *The Other Americans* (2019), Angie Kim's *Miracle Creek* (2019), and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* (2003). —*María del Carmen Cifuentes*

The Ingenue.
By Rachel Kapelke-Dale. Read by Stephanie Willis.

2022. 12hr. Macmillan, DD (9781250870681).

Saskia Kreis, currently unemployed, was once a precocious piano prodigy descended from a formerly wealthy family. Before the book begins, Saskia's mother died unexpectedly due to a previously unknown genetic disease. It is only through Saskia's memories that the listener comes to know her mother and their tumultuous relationship. Throughout the leisurely paced book, the listener discovers Saskia is a flawed young woman. Kapelke-Dale has crafted an intriguing story line that explores the complex relationships between parents and children. Willis' vocal characteristics convey the repercussions of sexual abuse in a compassionate style that envelops the listener. Within the heart-wrenching story line, the atmospheric and suspenseful tones are built and emphasized with sweeping acoustics. Willis brings a deeply emotional connection to Saskia with her intense, melodious narration. The periodic interjection of her mother's *Fairy-Tales for Little Feminists* provides an unexpected juxtaposition to the darkness of the plot. Perfect for fans of Kate Elizabeth Russell, Rebecca Reid, and Megan Abbott. —*Shoshana Frank*

Novelist as a Vocation.

By Haruki Murakami. Tr. by Philip Gabriel and Ted Goossen. Read by Kotaro Watanabe.

2022. 7.5hr. Books on Tape, DD (9781524721855).

Murakami's latest essay collection was originally published in Japan in 2015. "I'd like you to be aware of this," he writes in the 2022 translation's foreword. "During these past seven years we've experienced all kinds of crucial events. These circumstances have forced us to make some significant changes in our lives. These essays, though, do not reflect those changes," he clarifies. What *is* contained here is a humble, intimate reveal of how Murakami became—and stays—one of the world's most beloved, best-selling writers. An important tidbit for devotees: *when* he responds, *only* Murakami himself replies to his (not always) fan mail. This marks the third audio collaboration with actor Watanabe, implying a well-paired match. Watanabe reads, however, with a pronounced accent which, while confirming his admirable polyglot abilities, doesn't necessarily indicate a satisfying choice. Translators Philip Gabriel and Ted Goossen have clearly been established as Murakami's anointed Anglophone enablers because they provide English-reading audiences with a fluid experience. Shouldn't their translation also be presented with fluency? Watanabe fulfills his job, but his overly cautious delivery results in a disappointingly stilted performance. —*Terry Hong*

Responding to the Right: Brief Replies to 25 Conservative Arguments.

By Nathan J. Robinson. Read by the author.

2023. 11.5hr. Macmillan Audio, DD (9781250821416).

Political conversations can easily slide into invective and anger and shift from dialogue to diatribe. Robinson, editor of the liberal publication *Current Affairs*, seeks to equip listeners with what they need to notice logical fallacies, hyperbole, poor research, misinterpreted data, and veiled bigotry from conservative arguments and respond by using logic, fact-based responses, and an interpretation of left-wing politics that is optimistic. The author reads his work and does so briskly with a bounce that keeps the listener engaged through sometimes dense explanations that dive deeply into history. When Robinson quotes passages from well-known media and political figures, he does so with a nod to their recognizable cadences without devolving into mimicry, even if it is clear he disagrees with the individual. His clipped and rapid narration conveys the air of a terrifically excited professor eager to share his enthusiasm with his audience. Recommended for those on either side of the aisle seeking to engage on the big questions of our day with clarity and truth. —*Heather Booth*

Youth

The In-Between.

By Katie Van Heidrich. Read by Angel Pean.

2023. 3hr. Simon & Schuster Audio, DD (9781797154534). Gr. 4–8.

In seventh grade, while her peers are celebrating the winter holidays and her family is out of town for a funeral, Katie's family is evicted from their apartment. Her mother moves them to an extended-stay hotel where each sibling tries to carve out a corner of quiet for homework and their own bit of personal space in which to process the uncertainty of their life. Van Heidrich's memoir-in-verse is told in the first-person present tense as if from her younger self's journal, and each free-verse poem paints a picture of distinct elements of her life, such as the stress of school, frustration over weekends with her father, and the anxiety of hiding her situation from her peers. Throughout, Pean reads with a tenor of worry and tension in this empathetic narration. Moments of joy in Katie's life are rare, but when they arise, the listener welcomes the way Pean's voice audibly relaxes; her smile is audible. Offer this to listeners of Jasmine Warga's *Other Words for Home* or Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming.* —*Heather Booth*

Man Made Monsters.

By Andrea L. Rogers. Read by DeLanna Studi and Lane Factor.

Oct. 2023. 7.5. Recorded Books, DD (9781705081853). Gr. 9–12.

The synergies here are notable: Cherokee Oklahoman author Rogers makes her YA debut with a 2023 Walter Award–winning novel-in-stories; narrator Studi is a Cherokee Oklahoman actor who ciphers 14 of the 18 tales; first-time audiobook performer Lane Factor (TV-famous for playing Cheese in the critically acclaimed series *Reservation Dogs*) is also an Indigenous Oklahoman, specifically Creek-Seminole and Caddo. The duo could have been formidable in capturing Rogers' multiple generations of the Wilson family, whose matriarch Ama manages to appear in both the first and last stories despite the chronological passing of 200 years in between. Disappointment looms, alas, over Studi's serviceable, almost lethargic narration as she mostly reads the pages rather than embodying the many dynamic characters who inhabit the challenging, often horrific, Indigenous history from 1839 into the future 2039. Although Factor reads just four stories, his emotive resonance undoubtedly makes him the more convincing of the pair. The monsters are many, but beyond the vampires, werewolves, and zombies, man—all on his own—proves himself the most brutal and beastly of all. —*Terry Hong*

We Are All We Have.

By Marina Budhos. Read by Farah Merani.

2022. 7hr. Listening Library, DD (9780593609477).

Actor Merani has just a few audio credits, but she's convincingly facile in readily assuming multiple identities. In Budhos' latest, Merani effortlessly ciphers the Hasan family, smoothly individuating between feisty high-school senior Rania who expected an easy summer before starting college, her overprotective Pakistani immigrant mother, Ammi, and her mostly unaware, sweet eight-year-old brother. "They're here," Ammi's ominous words ring out, preceding ICE's middle-of-the-night raid. With Ammi in custody, estranged extended family won't help. Their lawyer works diligently to get Ammi out. But it's Trump's 2019, and there are many hoops to jump through before being granted asylum, even when your father's been disappeared in your birth country. At 17, Rania is a minor, which means the siblings are sent to a group home. Meeting fellow teen resident Carlos, however, inspires new plans; waiting for justice offers no guarantees, while freedom seems just a road trip away. Merani deftly shifts accents, from Latinx neighbors to Muslim parents, from New York lawyers to shelter personnel. She weaves both fear and hope into a resonating performance of multiple viewpoints and voices. —*Terry Hong*

We Deserve Monuments.

By Jas Hammonds. Read by Tamika Katon-Donegal.

2022. 10.5hr. Recorded Books, DD (9781705069547).

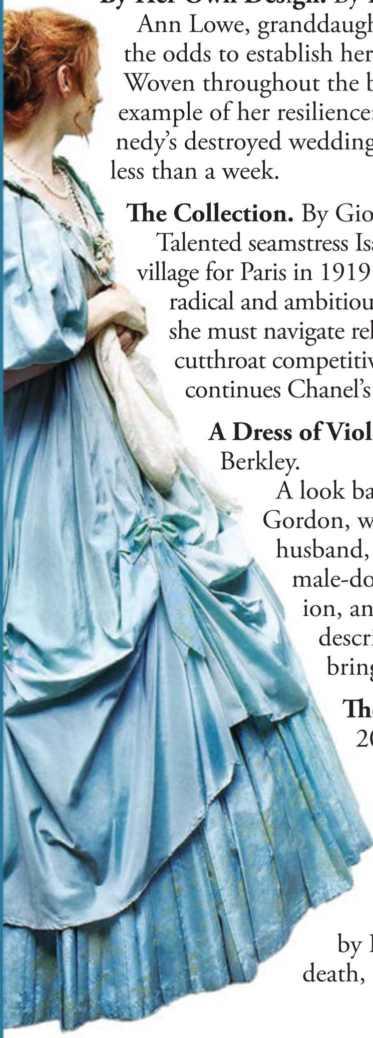
While the story belongs primarily to 17-year-old Avery—uprooted from DC to rural Bardell, Georgia—the narration's highlight is undoubtedly Mama Letty, her estranged grandmother whose terminal diagnosis has brought Avery's mother Zora back home. Katon-Donegal immediately imbues the dying matriarch with acerbic impatience and disappointed resentment, festering over the too many years that Zora abandoned her past. Not knowing all this allows Avery break through Mama Letty's hardened shell to reveal a once-upon-a-time loving wife, struggling single mother, and still-hopeful grandmother. Although biracial Avery stands out in Bardell as the new girl, she quickly makes friends with local girls Simone, whose mother has a history with Zora, and Jade. Mama Letty will be the conduit that reconnects the generations. Katon-Donegal moves convincingly from Avery's FOMO angst over missing her DC besties to the delight of discovering new love to the bittersweet joy of loving—and losing—Mama Letty. She gently unmasks over-efficient Zora, empowers Simone and soothes her mother, and exposes Jade's stepmother's vileness. Katon-Donegal expertly ensures Hammonds' best-selling debut gets a laudatory performance. —*Terry Hong*

Booklist Backlist

Fashion in Historical Fiction

By Maribeth Fisher

In historical fiction, the clothes help make the characters, so it's no surprise that there are a good number of novels about characters who make the fashion. From tales about well-known designers to those about seamstresses just trying to make ends meet, these books give us an up-close look at the people who go to great lengths to make others look good.



By Her Own Design. By Piper Huguley. 2022. Morrow.

Ann Lowe, granddaughter of enslaved people, defied the odds to establish herself as dressmaker to the elite. Woven throughout the book is perhaps the most notable example of her resilience: the story of Jacqueline Kennedy's destroyed wedding dress, which Ann recreated in less than a week.

The Collection. By Gioia Diliberto. 2007. Scribner.

Talented seamstress Isabelle Varlet leaves her French village for Paris in 1919 and lands in the atelier of the radical and ambitious designer Coco Chanel, where she must navigate relentless demands generated by the cutthroat competitiveness of haute couture. Diliberto continues Chanel's story in *Coco at the Ritz* (2021).

A Dress of Violet Taffeta. By Tessa Arlen. 2022. Berkley.

A look back at the life of Lucy Duff Gordon, who divorced her wayward first husband, built a successful business in the male-dominated world of couture fashion, and survived the *Titanic*. Vibrant descriptions of the dresses she created bring this story to life.

The Gown. By Jennifer Robson. 2018. Morrow.

In postwar Britain, Ann Hughes and Miriam Dassin work at the fashion house of Norman Hartnell, and they are soon tasked with embroidering the wedding gown to be worn by Princess Elizabeth. After Ann's death, her granddaughter finds a box of intricately embroidered flowers and travels to England to learn more.

Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker. By Jennifer Chiaverini. 2013. Dutton.

Formerly enslaved Elizabeth Keckley made a name for herself as a seamstress to some of the most influential women in Washington, DC, eventually being hired as the dressmaker for new First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln. In the years that followed, she became Mrs. Lincoln's confidante and a staunch defender of her legacy.

The Paris Secret. By Natasha Lester. 2020. Forever.

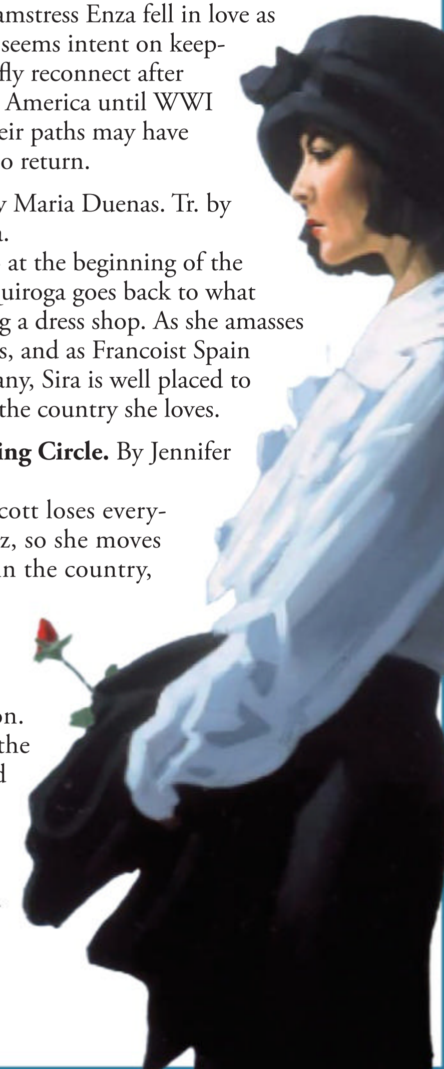
Fashion conservator Kat cannot imagine how her grandmother came to possess a secret stash of dozens of Christian Dior couture gowns. As she delves into her grandmother's past, she uncovers a connection to Dior's sister Catherine and the heartbreaking sacrifices made by women of the French Resistance in WWII.

The Pink Suit. By Nicole Mary Kelby. 2014. Little, Brown.

Kate, an Irish immigrant, works as a seamstress for Chez Ninon where she spends hours tediously working on what became Jacqueline Kennedy's tragically iconic pink suit. Kate's job impacts the personal choices she makes as she lives on the periphery of the world where wealthy women wear the elegant clothes she makes.

The Shoemaker's Wife. By Adriana Trigiani. 2012. Harper.

Shoemaker Ciro and seamstress Enza fell in love as teenagers in Italy, but life seems intent on keeping them apart. They briefly reconnect after separately immigrating to America until WWI intervenes, after which their paths may have diverged to the point of no return.



The Time in Between. By Maria Duenas. Tr. by Daniel Hahn. 2011. Atria.

Abandoned in Morocco at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, Sira Quiroga goes back to what she knows best by opening a dress shop. As she amasses politically powerful clients, and as Francoist Spain starts to align with Germany, Sira is well placed to spy for Britain to protect the country she loves.

The Wedding Dress Sewing Circle. By Jennifer Ryan. 2022. Ballantine.

Designer Cressida Wescott loses everything in the London Blitz, so she moves in with her niece Violet in the country, where she helps Grace, the local vicar's daughter, who is desperate for a special wedding dress despite the clothing ration. The three women mend the gown Grace's mother had worn and then share their talents to help other brides.

Maribeth Fisher is an Adult Services manager at the Scotch Plains (NJ) Public Library.

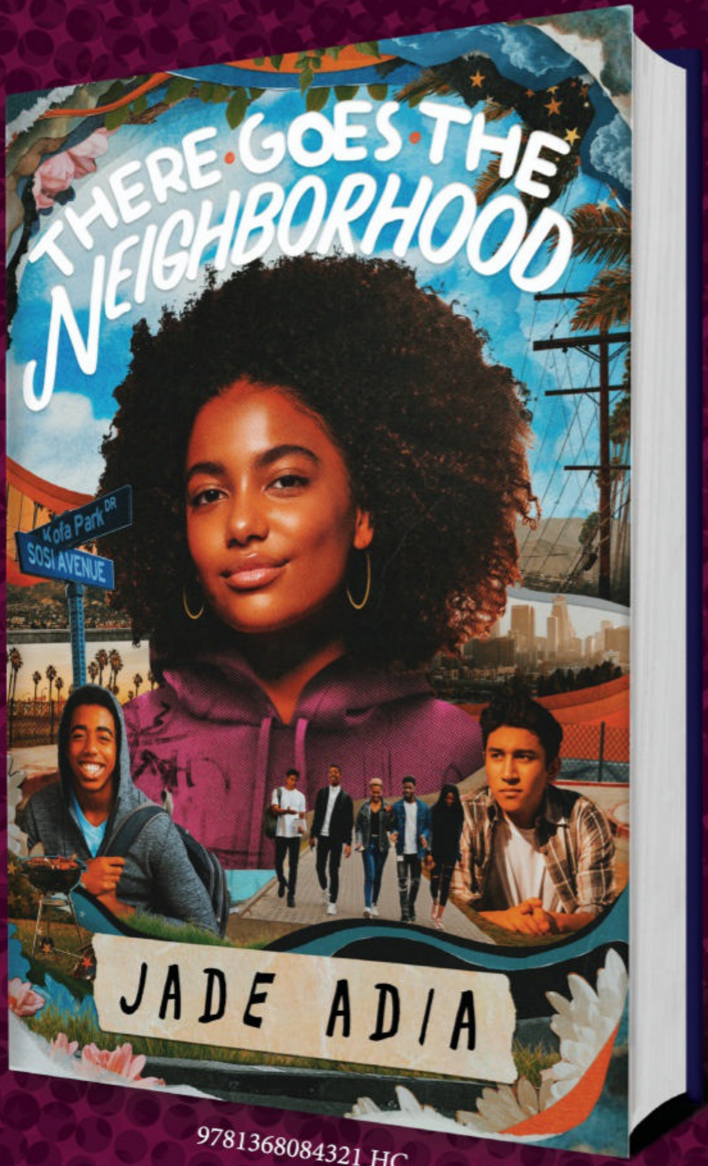
THE GANG IS FAKE,
BUT THE FEAR IS REAL

"In this riveting portrait of community care, debut author Adia paints the pain, danger, and consequences of gentrification with visceral clarity."

—*Publishers Weekly*

"A much-needed read. Plain terrific."

—*Kirkus Reviews*


THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD
Kofa Park DR
SOSI AVENUE
JADE ADIA

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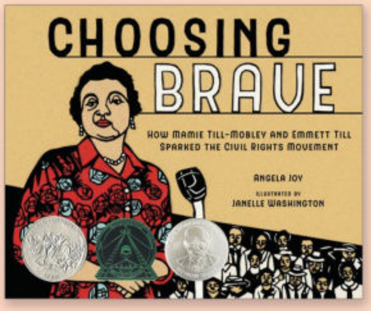
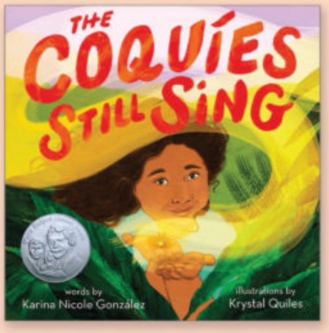
TO OUR 2023 AWARD WINNERS AND HONOREES!


CHOOSING BRAVE
HOW MAMIE TILL-MOBLEY AND EMMETT TILL SPARKED THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT
ANGELA JOY
ILLUSTRATED BY JANELLE WASHINGTON

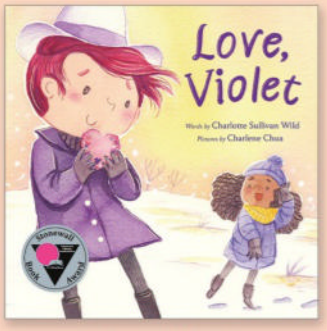
Randolph Caldecott Honor

Coretta Scott King–John Steptoe Award for New Talent Winner

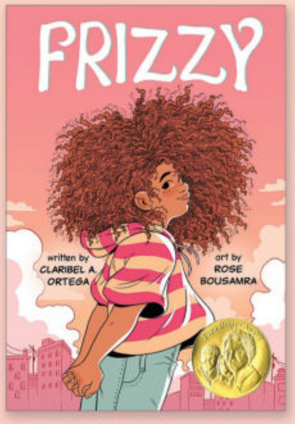
Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Honor


THE COQUÍES STILL SING
words by Karina Nicole González
illustrations by Krystal Quiles

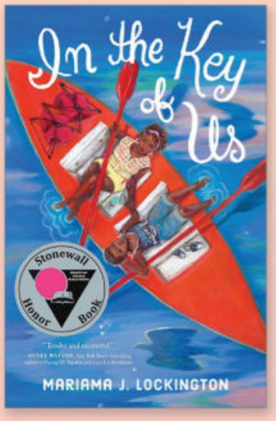
Pura Belpré Honor Book for Children's Text and Illustration


Love, Violet
Words by Charlotte Sullivan Wild
Pictures by Charlene Chua

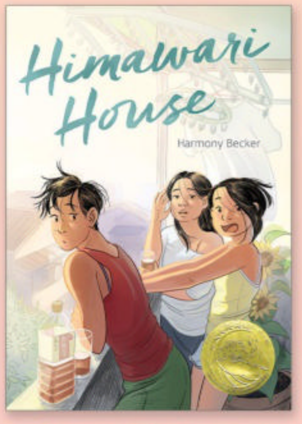
Stonewall Book Award Winner


FRIZZY
written by CLARIBEL A. ORTEGA
art by ROSE BOUSAMRA

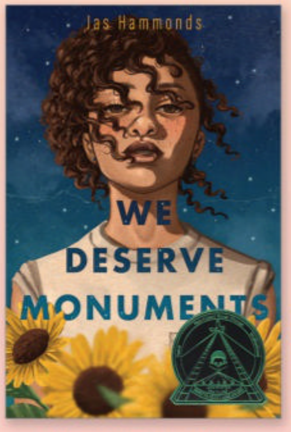
Pura Belpré Award for Children's Text Winner


In the Key of Us
MARIAMA J. LOCKINGTON

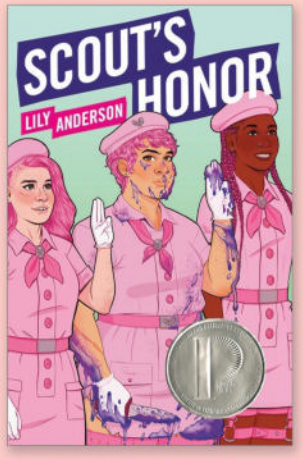
Stonewall Book Award Honor


Himawari House
Harmony Becker

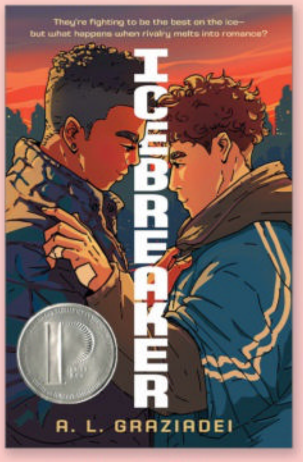
Asian / Pacific American Literature Award Winner


Jas Hammonds
WE DESERVE MONUMENTS

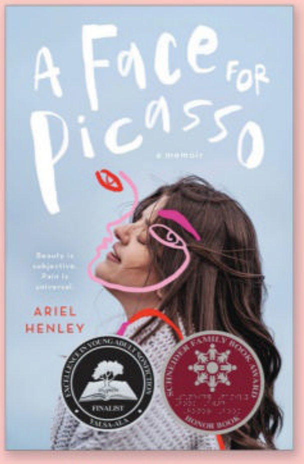
Coretta Scott King–John Steptoe Award for New Talent Winner


SCOUT'S HONOR
LILY ANDERSON

Michael L. Printz Award Honor


They're fighting to be the best on the ice— but what happens when rivalry melts into romance?
ICEBREAKER
A. L. GRAZIADEI

Michael L. Printz Award Honor


A Face for Picasso
a memoir
Beauty is subjective. Pain is universal.
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